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**ANNI FUGACES**

**A BOOK OF VERSE WITH  
CAMBRIDGE INTERLUDES**



# **ANNI FUGACES**

**A BOOK OF VERSE WITH  
CAMBRIDGE INTERLUDES**

**BY**

**R. C. LEHMANN**

**JOHN LANE: THE BODLEY HEAD  
LONDON AND NEW YORK. MCMII**



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FOR A. L.

*Go, little book of verses that mark the flying years,  
Go, smile thy best and brightest, nor tremble into tears;  
And bid my well-loved lady, if aught her pleasure stirs  
In all thy humble music, to make thee wholly hers.*

*And tell her that the years, too, of which her lover sings,  
They bring their gifts and take them on soft and silent  
wings;  
And sometimes, half in earnest and half, I think, in mirth,  
They drop a shining feather that flutters to the earth.*

*And lo, the transmutation! The feather fades away,  
And in its place a woman steps out into the day,—  
A true and tender woman with sunshine in her eyes,  
And someone comes (I came so) and wins her for a prize.*

R. C. L.

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R. C. L.

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## A THOUSAND YEARS AGO

*To F. H. L.*

THE golden world of children ! How far away it seems,  
That land of fairy melody, of laughter and of dreams,  
Where all the chairs and tables were built extremely tall—  
At least they looked gigantic when you and I were small !

And in the dear old garden the roses grew so high,  
We only saw in glimpses the azure of the sky.  
I know not how it comes, Fred, but nothing seems to grow  
As high as in our childhood, a thousand years ago.

And, oh, do you remember how oft we used to start  
At keen delicious dangers that thrilled us to the heart ?  
And what delightful terrors the waking vision gave,  
That made the hall a jungle, the cabinet a cave ?

Beneath the cushioned sofa a tiger had his lair ;  
I still recall with shudders his fierce familiar glare.  
The cupboard in the passage was meant for household  
stores ;

It simply teemed with lions, who shook the roof with roars.

And when the nights came early, with storms of wind  
and rain,  
A pair of chubby noses were flattened on the pane :

We thought to catch a vision of fay or elf or gnome,  
Umbrella-less and dragged and hurrying for home.

We leapt at the suggestion that giants used to dwell  
Within the shadowed corner where stood the dinner-bell;  
But ere we went a-hunting, to capture and to bind,  
One question was propounded — “But are the giants  
kind?”

But now the shadowed corners are corners—nothing more;  
The giants’ towered gateway is but a common door;  
And those who tread the drawbridge, now dwindled to a  
mat,  
Are merely men and women, and undersized at that.

And all the house is silent : no dreadful roars appal,  
No jungle stays the huntsmen who used to roam the hall.  
The fierce-eyed, deep-mouthed tiger, I sometimes seem to  
think,  
Was only Dash, the spaniel, intent upon a drink.

And Dash himself has left us : where once he used to keep  
A vigil for his master he sleeps an endless sleep.  
No eager furry figure gives welcome as I pass  
Where erst, his broad ears flapping, he tore across the grass.

So, Fred, I love to wander amid the magic haze  
Half hiding, half revealing those far delightful days,  
Before the fairies flitted, who held their court below,  
When you and I were children a thousand years ago.

## MIDDLE AGE

WHEN that my years were fewer,  
Some twenty years ago,  
And all that is was newer,  
And time itself seemed slow,  
With ardour all impassioned,  
I let my hopes fly free,  
And deemed the world was fashioned  
My playing-field to be.

The cup of joy was filled then  
With Fancy's sparkling wine ;  
And all the things I willed then  
Seemed destined to be mine.  
Friends had I then in plenty,  
And every friend was true ;  
Friends always are at twenty,  
And on to twenty-two.

The men whose hair was sprinkled  
With little flecks of gray,  
Whose faded brows were wrinkled—  
Sure they had had their day.




And though we bore no malice,  
We knew their hearts were cold,  
For they had drained their chalice,  
And now were spent and old.

At thirty, we admitted,  
A man may be alive,  
But slower, feebler witted ;  
And done at thirty-five.  
If Fate prolongs his earth-days,  
His joys grow fewer still ;  
And after five more birthdays  
He totters down the hill.

*We* were the true immortals  
Who held the earth in fee ;  
For us were flung the portals  
Of fame and victory.  
The days were bright and breezy,  
And gay our banners flew,  
And every peak was easy  
To scale at twenty-two.

. . . . .

And thus we spent our gay time  
As having much to spend ;  
Swift, swift, that pretty playtime  
Flew by and had its end.



And lo ! without a warning  
I woke, as others do,  
One fine, mid-winter morning,  
A man of forty-two.

And now I see how vainly  
Is youth with ardour fired ;  
How fondly, how insanelly  
I formerly aspired.  
A boy may still detest age,  
But as for me, I know,  
A man has reached his best age  
At forty-two or so.

For youth it is the season  
Of restlessness and strife ;  
Of passion and unreason,  
And ignorance of life.  
Since, though his cheeks have roses,  
No boy can understand  
That everything he knows is  
A graft at second hand.

But *we* have toiled and wandered  
With weary feet and numb ;  
Have doubted, sifted, pondered,—  
How else should knowledge come ?

Have seen, too late for heeding,  
Our hopes go out in tears,  
Lost in the dim, receding,  
Irrevocable years.

Yet, though with busy fingers  
No more we wreath the flowers,  
An airy perfume lingers,  
A brightness still is ours.  
And though no rose our cheeks have,  
The sky still shines as blue ;  
And still the distant peaks have  
The glow of twenty-two.

### THREE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

BEFORE the fireside's ruddy glow  
I sit, and let my thoughts fly free ;  
Lo, these my Christmas greetings go  
To three good friends beyond the sea.  
Vain is the winter tempest's wrack,  
It cannot keep my greetings back.

Oh wind and rain, and rain and wind,  
How purposeless and blind ye are,  
Like fate, for fate was surely blind  
That bade my three friends range afar.  
Like mine, perchance, their fancy strays  
To other scenes and distant days.

Dear Frank, I think I see you now,  
My flaxen-haired American,  
Brave heart, grey eye, unclouded brow,  
Two stalwart yards of wilful man ;  
How oft in laughter and in song  
With you I sped the hours along.


## THREE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Ah me, the days were all too short,  
Too swift the unreturning hours  
In that old town of Hall and court,  
Of ancient gateways flanked with towers,  
Where once we feared the near exam.  
And dared the dons, and stirred the Cam.

You went, and now expound the law  
(As *Bumble* said, the law's a ass),  
And argue, as I note with awe,  
For litigants in Boston, Mass.;  
And, though you wear no warlike suit,  
They call you "General" to boot.

And, Fred, how fares it now with you  
In that drear country of the North?  
Too great your needs, your means too few,  
A whim of temper drove you forth.  
On far Vancouver's shore, alone,  
You hear the sad Pacific moan.

With us, God wot, you little throve,  
Your life all fire, and storm, and fret;  
Against relentless fate you strove,  
But strove in vain—and yet, and yet  
God shapes in storm and fire his plan,  
And moulds a world or makes a man.



Good luck be yours on that bleak shore,  
Some fortunate, some golden prize;  
Then be it mine to see once more  
Those friendly, lustrous, Irish eyes.  
Return and face with us your fate,—  
The world is small and England great.

You shall return and fill your place,  
But never shall I clasp his hand,  
Whose bright and smiling boyish face  
Makes sunshine in the shadowland.  
Yet shall the night my heart beguile.  
And let me dream I see him smile.

Your voice I may not hear again,  
Oh dear and unforgotten friend,  
Beloved, but ah! beloved in vain,  
Whom love could mourn, but not defend.  
Still take, though far and lost you dwell,  
My love, dear Hugh, and so farewell.

And thus before the fireside's glow  
I sit and let my thoughts fly free;  
Lo, these my Christmas greetings go  
To three good friends beyond the sea;  
To Frank, to Fred, and ah, to you,  
Beloved, irrevocable Hugh.

## ADVANCING YEARS

*How it strikes a Contemporary*

(1891)

[Owing to advancing years, Mr. — has been compelled to resign his position as —." *Extract from any Daily Paper.*]

ADVANCING years ! It cannot be.

What Jack, the boy I've known—God bless me !

Why yes, it was in '43

That first we met, and—since you press me—

That's close on fifty years ago ;

The time has sped without my knowledge,

Like some deep river's silent flow,

Since Jack and I first met in College.

'Twas on a cloudy Autumn day,

Fast fading into misty twilight ;

The freshmen, as they trooped to pray,

Stepped bolder in the evening's shy light.

As yet we did not break the rules

In which the College deans immesh men,

We fledglings from a score of schools,

That far October's brood of freshmen.

Like one who starts upon a race,  
The Chaplain through the service scurried.  
From prayer to prayer he sped apace;  
I marked him less the more he hurried,  
My prayer-book fell—my neighbour smiled;  
Reversing Newton with the apple,  
I, by that neighbour's eye beguiled,  
Quite lost my gravity in chapel.

And so we smiled. I see him still,  
Blue eyes, where darting gleams of fun shine,  
A smile like some translucent rill  
That sparkles in the summer sunshine;  
A manly mien, and unafraid,  
Crisp hair, fair face, and square-set shoulders,  
That made him on the King's Parade  
The cynosure of all beholders.

And from this slight irreverence,  
Too small, I hope, to waste your blame on,  
We grew, in quite a Cambridge sense,  
A sort of Pythias and Damon.  
Together "kept," together broke  
Laws framed by elderly Draconians,  
And I was six, and Jack was stroke,  
That famous night we bumped the Johnians.



How strong he was, how fleet of foot,  
Ye bull-dogs witness, and ye Proctors ;  
How bright his jests, how aptly put  
His scorn of duns, and Dons, and Doctors.  
We laughed at care, read now and then—  
Though vexed by Euclid on the same bridge—  
Ah, men in those great days were men  
When Jack and I wore gowns at Cambridge.

We paid our fines, we paid our fees,  
And, though the Dons seemed stony-hearted,  
We both got very fair degrees,  
And then, like other friends, we parted.  
And when we said good-bye at last  
I vowed through life to be his brother—  
And more than forty years have passed  
Since each set eyes upon the other.

And so through all these changing years  
With all their thousand changing faces,  
Their failures, hopes, successes, fears,  
In half a hundred different places,  
Jack still has been the same to me,  
As bright within my memory's fair book  
As when we met in '43,  
And smiled about that fallen prayer-book.

Ah well, the moments swiftly stream  
Unheeded through the up-turned hour-glass ;  
I've lived my life, and dreamed my dream,  
And quaffed the sweet, as now the sour glass.  
But old and spent my mind strays back  
To pleasant paths fresh-strewn with roses,  
And I would see my old friend Jack  
Once more before the curtain closes.

## CAMBRIDGE REVISITED

*A Fogey's Experience in 1889*

A MAN is as old as he feels, no doubt ;  
I thought so at least till yesterday,  
Forgetting that time and a wife and gout  
Turn smooth to wrinkled and black to grey,—

Till yesterday, when I went to dine  
With Harry, the son of Dick, my friend ;  
We were freshmen together in '59,—  
Bright days, how swiftly they had their end !

We both wore gloves with our cap and gown,  
And umbrellas, too, in showery weather,  
And on Guy Fawkes Day we challenged the town,  
And gave and received black eyes together.

We both cut chapels and stayed out late :  
I wonder if Dick can still play loo ?  
Could he climb, I wonder, the New Court gate,  
As—I blush to confess it—we used to do ?

We both bought wine and cigars (on tick),  
And both with our money were far too free ;  
And the Dean was often "at home " to Dick—  
He was just as often "at home " to me.

And one great evening, I call to mind,  
When Proctor and bull-dogs gave us chase,  
Dick was noisy (we both had dined),  
And they ran us down in the Market Place.

But oh, what a race we had of it first !  
Petty Cury, Parade, and forrard again,  
Through Senate House Passage, and then with a burst  
Into Trinity Street through Trinity Lane.

How gay were our songs in the days gone by !  
Chorus on chorus,—“The Hunting Day,”  
And “ The Whiskered Captain ” whose glance was sly,  
And “ Auld Lang Syne ” and “The Vicar of Bray.”

And Phyllis was always our only joy,  
The maiden who never failed to please ;  
And we sang to her often, wanton or coy,  
In a charming assortment of varied keys.

And some of us sang of a bob-tailed mare,  
With a curious chorus of “ dooh dah day,”  
And some of the maiden with golden hair,  
And old John Peel with his coat so gay.

And some sent Bowling up to the sky,  
Poor Tom Bowling whose heart was soft ;  
I would that our voices had reached as high  
As the soul of Tom when it went aloft.

We trifled a little with  $x$  and  $y$ ,  
And we dabbled in Greek, and with shame I own  
That Dick wrote dates on his cuff, whilst I  
Took some pages in from our old friend Bohn.

But Dick's a Lancashire rector now,  
And he lives a sober and solemn life,  
With a face as grave as a Proctor's bow,  
And a barren glebe and a fruitful wife.

And I—well, I am the fool who thought  
That the years could vanish and leave no sign  
On the veteran Master of Arts who bought  
His cap and his gown in '59.

For yesterday, as I paced again,  
Through the grey old Court where the fountain plays,  
I felt that the decades had passed in vain,  
And had left me as young as in other days.

Then I dined with Harry (I love that boy,  
For his face, God bless him ! is just like Dick's),  
And I did my best to seem to enjoy  
His brut champagne and his courses six.



And the raw young jokes of his five young friends—  
They laughed quite heartily too at mine ;  
What a fund of laughter an old joke lends !  
And mine were older than Harry's wine.

But at last, when the lads were growing mellow,  
I opened the door and prepared to go,  
And (I heard it plainly), "A good old fellow,"  
Said one to the other ; "but, Lord, how slow !"

And all in a moment the vision vanished,  
And I, who was young when I climbed the stair,  
Crept dismally down with my fancies banished,  
A wrinkled fogey with grizzling hair.

And I said to myself, as I passed the gate,  
"What boots it to show to these careless boys  
That a man can be young at forty-eight,  
When he steps less briskly and makes no noise ?"

Yet time will avenge me, my young disdainer ;  
You will know why I cling to my youthful past,  
When the pitiless years that make all things plainer  
Shall have placed you too on the shelf at last.

## FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE

*Hugh Benjamin Cotton, Magdalen College, Oxford.*

*Died October, 1895*

Alas, what availed our strength of arm  
Or health to us who saw you sleep;  
We could not guard you, friend, from harm,  
We could but wait and watch and weep.  
Oh fondly loved, oh little friend,  
Is this the end, is this the end?

The squadrons thunder on the plain,  
In one last charge the fight is won,  
But those who fall die not in vain,  
Their country saved, their duty done.  
Lo, how they lie, their brows still bright  
With all the triumph of the fight!

And when an old man goes, he dies  
His task performed, his struggle o'er;  
His sons are by to close his eyes,  
He sleeps in peace, and toils no more:  
Honour and love were his, and best,  
Far best of all, he now has rest.



But you had but begun the day,  
The first full flush was hardly yours :  
An hour of work, of joy, of play,  
The rest was hope—but hope endures—  
And then came Death and touched your hand,  
And took you to the sunless land.

Yet lying in your little room  
Through those last days when life grew faint,  
Your constant temper chased our gloom,  
Your hero's courage scorned complaint :  
Still through all shocks your soul withstood,  
Renewed the fight and made it good.

But Nature, pitiless and cold,  
Made stern by tears and strong by strife,  
Chose from her treasure-house of gold  
This young, this unoffending life,  
Inspected with a curious eye,  
Then heedless flung the treasure by.

O rebel heart, be still, be still,  
Impeach not thus the great design :  
He plans it out to suit His will,  
Here adds, and there wipes out a line :  
Who planned the whole He best must know  
What part may stand, and what shall go.



We too shall see His purpose plain,  
And grasp the secret of His plan  
Who fills a life or makes it vain,  
And mars the work His hand began,  
When the great world that now is scrolled  
In God's own day shall be unrolled.

So, here in Magdalen, hail again,  
Beneath the Tower, or in the Hall,  
Or through the Cloisters, where a rain  
Of red leaves flutters from the wall,  
Or where in old and happy days  
The Barges echoed with your praise.

Though lost and dead, you die not here;  
And, wheresoever men may range  
Who once at Oxford held you dear  
And called you friend, you know no change:  
Still shall we see you stride along,  
Smiling and resolute and strong.

We shall grow old, but you abide  
In all our hearts as staunch and true  
And young as when on Thames's tide  
You gripped your oar and won your Blue—  
But hush! I hear the passing bell,  
Oh dearest friend, farewell, farewell.

## GOOD-NIGHT !

*(After Two Years)*

SEPTEMBER clouds the skies with grey,  
And cold winds shiver through the rose :  
Now swift and swifter every day  
Draws to its dark and destined close.  
But still, though wind and rain be keen,  
Still are the swaying branches green.

For Summer has not yielded yet ;  
Still in stray gleams her tresses glow.  
But, ah ! with tears her face is wet,  
She lingers, but she turns to go.  
And on the air her whisper dies—  
“Farewell, damp earth and chilly skies !”


So let her pass ; the shadows fall ;  
I set the ruddy fire alight ;  
Its glamour flickers through the hall,  
A sober silence holds the night.  
And as I sit, dim shapes of air  
Appear and fade about my chair.

And once again I pace with you  
Through that old city, grey and worn,  
Where hopes are high and hearts are true,  
And life a cheerful Summer morn ;  
In that serene, familiar place  
Where first I met you face to face.

Small care we knew, we had no fear  
To mar our joy in earthly things.  
We trembled not, we did not hear  
The beating of the sable wings  
Of one that waited on the brink,  
"The angel of the darker drink."

Oh ! joy too fresh and pure to last,  
Great days of friendship swiftly fled,  
Still to my mournful heart made fast,  
With me ye live, ye are not dead !  
The hours that linked us man to man  
Outweigh a lifetime's rounded span.

Two years are gone, your welcome voice  
Makes music still to dull my pain.  
You smile and bid my heart rejoice,  
Your friendship cheers me yet again.  
I call you, and unchanged you stand,  
As first you stood and clasped my hand.



And thus, recalled at will, you prove  
That death is naught and fate is blind.  
Life's brightness in your eyes, you move  
Through the clear chambers of my mind.  
This Nature grants, since death controls  
Our breath, but not the world of souls.

I take old Omar from the shelf—  
He knew the stars, and much beside—  
“Go, live your life, and be yourself,  
And take the gifts the gods provide.”  
Thus still his voice is in our ears  
Through twice four hundred rolling years.

I shall not know what none may see,  
I cannot pierce beyond the stars;  
I let the whence and whither be,  
Nor beat vain wings against the bars.  
But blood still courses through my veins,  
And life is mine, and hope remains.

And you, oh! friend of former days,  
Be with me, make my purpose strong;  
Still through the world's encircling maze  
Help you my faltering steps along.  
The last flames flicker, fade and die,  
Good-night, dear friend, but not Good-bye.

J. K. STEPHEN

*(Died February 3rd, 1892)*

UNTIMELY lost ! ah, melancholy phrase,  
That sounds our hopes' irreparable knell—  
Untimely lost, yet not too soon for praise,  
Dear friend and fellow-worker, fare you well.

We who had loved you fain had kept you here,  
Here 'mid the spacious courts you loved to pace,  
Here 'mid the grey old walls you held so dear,  
Where youth and hope revived you for a space.

Oft did I meet you by our winding Cam,  
Talked, jested, argued, while we sat and dined ;  
Heard you in scorn of many a loud-voiced sham  
Speak homely sense in brilliant words enshrined.

And oft in fancy did I wreath your name  
With praise and honour, won by strength and skill ;  
Beheld you climb the steep that leads to fame,  
And watched you ever rising higher still,

Till all was yours on which your heart was set ;  
And now—the curtain closes on the scene ;  
And sorrow claims us, and a vain regret  
For all we lose, and all that might have been.

Oft shall we pause upon our daily round,  
And one shall mourning to the other say,  
‘Here did his joyous, kindly welcome sound,’  
Or, ‘Here he sudden flashed from grave to gay.’

Or, ‘Here he rolled sonorous eloquence,  
With magic sentences enthralled the ear,  
Till just the one word, squared to fit the sense,  
Dropped to its place and made his meaning clear.’

Or, ‘Here he thrilled us with swift-darting shocks  
Of lightning humour, or with innocent guile  
O’erturned our arguments with paradox,  
And lulled our reason with that glowing smile.’

Never again : the thin-spun life is slit,  
The bright-hued, lambent flame expires in gloom.  
Whither, we questioned, tends the Muse of wit ?  
Comes the dread answer—to the silent tomb.

O massive head, that great thoughts seem to bow !  
O deep-set eyes, whose light we ill could spare !  
O genial face, and noble, classic brow,  
Broad ’neath its tangled mass of heavy hair !—

Farewell, farewell ; not wholly are you gone ;  
    Something we keep, though much we loved departs,  
For while we live your memory lives on,  
    Deathless, dear friend, dear Jem, within our hearts.

## BILL ASPLEN

*For Thirty Years Boatman to the C.U.B.C. Died 1890.*

WHAT! dear old Bill? Well, I might have known, for  
the flags are all half-mast high;  
The poor old chap had been ill for months, he knew he  
was like to die;  
But Bill wasn't one to grumble, though he felt that the  
end was near;  
"I'll face it," he said, "as a boatman should," and he  
never gave way to fear,  
And his rugged old face looked worn and wan, and his  
honest eyes grew dim,  
But he knew he had done his duty straight, and that was  
enough for him.

He was only a boatman, true enough, but he never was  
known to shirk;  
And with bolts and riggers and screws and slides, it isn't  
the easiest work.  
It was "lengthen my stretcher," or "rasp my oar," or  
"Bill, you must plane my sill,"  
Or "raise my rigger a bare half inch"—it was always  
the same to Bill;



For he answered them all with a cheery smile, "t'aint much, sir, I'll put it right,"  
And whatever his hand could find to do, he did it with all his might.

And winters in Cambridge are keen and cold, and the bitter nor'-easters freeze;  
But Bill and his boat-hook were always there, with his "Ready, gentlemen, please."  
And he bustled about in his old blue cap, and his scarf, and his ancient coat,  
And the crew were always "the fastest lot that's ever sat in a boat."  
And if ever a veteran oar turned up, to see how the boys could row,  
"I'm blest," said Bill, as he grasped his hand, "if it ain't Mr. So-and-So."  
"Twenty years back? It's a precious lot! Why I thought it was only ten;  
But there's one thing certain, sir, you and me, we was both of us younger then.  
Lor! I remember how strong you were, and how steady you rowed and long;  
But I think"—and the old face glowed with pride—"that the young 'uns are just as strong."  
For Bill he was never a croaker, no, and nobody heard him say

That the best of the rowing was done for quite when  
the fixed-seats vanished away.

“They’ve been good ’uns as long as I’ve known ’em,  
sir, and I’ve known a proper few :

And I warrant there’ll always be good ’uns left to row in  
the Cambridge crew.”

Polish? Not much, but who cares for that, if the heart  
be as true as steel,

And the kindly eyes look straight into yours, with a look  
you can almost feel;

And the voice rings true in its welcome, though the  
sound be a trifle gruff?

If that’s what you call rough manners, I own I prefer  
them rough.

There’s many a nobleman, born and bred, with money  
in heaps to spend,

And a mincing voice and a shiny hat, and manners and  
style no end;

But I know that if *they* went missing I should feel pretty  
happy still,

If I only could have another day and a shake of the hand  
with Bill.

Ah, well, good-bye to you, dear old friend, the river  
won’t seem the same

When another stands in the well-known place, and is  
called by another name.

Here on the banks of the sluggish Cam the best of your  
life was passed,  
And I know when your strength was well-nigh spent  
your thoughts turned here at the last.  
Loyal and staunch as a man should be, with the heart  
of a little child,  
After weary months when the summons came you folded  
your hands and smiled.  
And I think that the Angel of Mercy who stands on the  
top-most hill  
Will stretch a hand, for He knows men's hearts, to our  
dear old boatman Bill.

## A RETRIEVER'S EPITAPH

BENEATH this turf, that formerly he pressed  
With agile feet, a Dog is laid to rest.  
Him, as he sleeps, no well-known sound shall stir,  
The rabbit's patter or the pheasant's whirr;  
The keeper's "Over!"—far, but well-defined,  
That speeds the startled partridge down the wind;  
The whistled warning, as the winged ones rise  
Large and more large upon our straining eyes,  
Till with a swoop, while every nerve is tense,  
The chattering covey hurtles o'er the fence;  
The double crack of every lifted gun;  
The dinting thud of birds whose course is done—  
These sounds, that to his listening ear were dear,  
He heeds no longer, for he cannot hear.  
None stauncher, till the drive was done, defied  
Temptation, rooted to his master's side.  
None swifter, when his master gave the word,  
Leapt on his course to track the running bird,  
And bore it back—ah, many a time and oft!—  
His nose as faultless as his mouth was soft.

How consciously, how proudly unconcerned  
Straight to his master's side he then returned,  
Wagged a glad tail and deemed himself repaid,  
As in that master's hand the bird he laid,  
If, while a word of praise was duly said,  
The hand should stroke his smooth and honest head.  
Through Spring and Summer, in the sportless days,  
Cheerful he lived a life of simpler ways:  
Chose, since official dogs at times unbend,  
The household cat for confidante and friend;  
With children, friendly but untaught to fawn,  
Romped through the walks and frolicked on the lawn;  
Rejoiced, if one the frequent ball should throw,  
To fetch it, scampering gaily to and fro,  
Content through every change of sportive mood  
If one dear voice, one only, called him good.

Such was my Dog, who now without my aid  
Hunts through the shadow-land, himself a shade;  
Or, couched intent before some ghostly gate,  
Waits for my step, as here he used to wait.

## **Menses Academici**



## OCTOBER

O you who come freshly, while autumn is turning  
The leaves that were green into scraps that are brown,  
To the fountain of wisdom, the temple of learning,  
The haunt, in a word, of the cap and the gown,—  
How the weary old grey-beards must note with surprise  
The ring of your laughter, the light in your eyes!

Advance without fear, for these courts are your Mother's,  
For the sons who have left her our Cambridge is sad;  
Yet shall we who remain give you greeting as brothers;  
You are come to replace them—advance and be glad.  
And forget not, O men, in the freedom and joy  
Of your newly-made manhood the hopes of the boy.

We have much to delight you—the field and the river  
(Though the scoffers say Camus foots slow\* in a  
drain);

We have books for the thinker and feasts for the liver,  
Who is coloured (with scarves), while the thinker is  
plain.

We have Tutors to guard us, and Deans who can gate,  
And the price of a Proctor is still six-and-eight.

\* Cf. Lycidas.



We have clubs where the lad who but lately sucked  
toffee

May recline if he likes at the close of the day,  
While he sips his *Chartreuse* as a *chasse* to his coffee,  
And attempts, greatly daring, to colour a clay;  
And it's oh for that lad when he staggers to bed  
With a clay-coloured face and a pain in his head!

We have halls where they feed us and halls for debating;  
We have bedmakers robed in a bonnet and shawl;  
We have chapels—and here let me help you by stating  
That a chapel, when “cut,” often ends in a “haul.”  
And I beg you will master, since learning is cheap,  
The mystical, manifold meanings of “keep.”

We have coaches galore to rebuke us for “bucket”;  
We have smugs, we have bloods *Trinitatis e Coll.*;  
And the man who of tripos grows weary can “chuck it,”  
To be coached—which is usual—and ploughed for the  
poll.  
Yet we mostly succeed, and on paying a fee  
Wear the skin of a rabbit and take our degree.


We have “grinds” for our wranglers, and “funnies” for  
scullers;  
We’ve a drag for our horsemen, and Claspers for  
crews;

And for those who love lightning and dote upon colours  
We have blazers, five hundred, from which they may  
choose.

But we robe after dark, lest the best of the game  
Be the Proctor's who asks us our college and name.


We have problems, alas! that are stiff as our collars,  
With a flavour of  $\pi$  to the  $n^{\text{th}}$  minus one;  
And to those who would emulate Pindar our scholars—  
Dr. Jebb is a sample—can show how it's done.  
But at times the high gods who o'er papers preside  
Send a lady from Newnham to chasten our pride.

So advance and be welcome; we greet you delighted;  
And oh! be not tired of your freshness too soon;  
The age that you ask for will come uninvited,  
Like the thief in the night or the Tripos in June.  
And we envy, who pause and regret and grow grey,  
The joy of mere living that stirs you to-day.



## A WELCOME

ONCE again—(I must attempt it, though my pen the  
topic shuns)  
Cambridge waking from her slumber welcomes as before  
her sons :  
As before I have to hymn them, having hymned them  
many times,  
Having tried each different metre and exhausted all my  
rhymes ;  
Having wooed the weary Muses and attempted to entice  
Each poetic trope to serve me when I wished to give  
advice :  
Now, again, when chill October sheds her colours on the  
leaves,  
When the farmer counts his losses, having stacked or sold  
his sheaves,  
Counts them well and duly grumbles over all his wasted  
crops,  
How the price of food increases while the price of  
produce drops.  
Now with undiminished ardour must I dip my pen  
again,  
And indite a joyous greeting to our latest batch of Men.



Like the sturdy British farmer we have losses too to  
count;  
Men we lose in place of cattle—who shall total the  
amount?  
Men of light and men of leading, men of weight—but  
not of lead,  
Lead is dull and these were bright ones, judge them by  
the rays they shed.  
Orators of matchless daring, who with accents swift and  
loud  
Greatly from their leathern benches swayed the fiery  
Union crowd.  
Democrat-denouncing Tories, scorning each new-fangled  
craze,  
Standing firm and undefeated ever in the ancient ways.  
Radicals of fire and fury such as only youth affords,  
Down on everything, but chiefly down upon the House  
of Lords;  
Business-meeting busybodies straining still th' applausive  
throat,  
Unreturning have they vanished never more to speak or  
vote.

Wranglers, too, a race undaunted, whose pursuits were  
pure and high,  
Striving always to discover meanings new of *x* and *y*.  
Classics skilful to interpret what the scholiast might  
mean,

Greek and Latin ghosts who revelled in the realms of  
the unseen :

Men of beards and men of learning who could cultivate  
the mind

Daily to-ing, daily fro-ing on the Trumpingtonian grind ;  
Rising with the early sunbeam, like a troop of dowdy  
larks

Trained to pipe exultant music to a paper-god of marks.  
Medicine-men of all conditions, lawyers of the separate  
sorts,

Real and Personal and Crimes men, Contracts men, and  
men of Torts ;

Men who studied the historians at the bidding of O.B.—  
They have vanished like the others, they have taken a  
degree.

Giddy actors, gallant oarsmen who disturbed the sedgy  
Cam,

Men of blade-work, not of book-work, though they  
scorned not their exam. :

Handsome Roger, doughty Trevor, who with undefeated  
pluck

Strove at each successive Putney, vainly strove against  
the luck.

Broad and beefy College oarsmen with their bumpers and  
their bumps,

Batsmen too and tricky bowlers who preferred the  
ground in lumps.

Many a slim and lively runner, many a Titan who  
pursued

Runs in Summer, goals in Winter, football-cricket-  
double-blued.

Men of beagles and of horses, men who wore the pink  
and white,

Pinned by bull-dogs, taxed by proctors, as they roamed  
the streets at night.

Never more to bid defiance to policeman or to don,  
Poll-degreed or ploughed entirely, hence for ever are  
they gone.

Yet though some have parted from us, having reached  
the appointed goal,

With its freight of youth and ardour onward still the car  
must roll.

Others fill the vacant places, pressing with an eager  
zest

To the forefront of the battle, there to strive amid the  
best.

Friends henceforth and fellow-soldiers, comrades in the  
fights we wage,

New-found sons of ancient Cambridge, men in every-  
thing but age,

Oh be welcome, oh be welcome ; here are prizes to be  
won,

Great traditions to be cherished, deeds of honour to be  
done.

And to some, who give you greeting, through a mist of  
many years

Something of the joyous brightness of a lost day re-  
appears.

Age may mark them and deface them, yet they smile to  
welcome *you*,

And remember—*heu fugaces!*—how they once were  
freshmen too.

## DECEMBER

### *Ad Exeuntes*

FAREWELL! for already the fly and the hansom  
Are chartered to whirl you rejoicing away ;  
And Dewberry, Warwicker, Matthew, and Ransom  
Have asked you politely (in writing) to pay.  
And you see with surprise the increasing amounts  
Of those frequently rendered, forgotten accounts.

And your gyp, as he packs your portmanteaus and boxes,  
Suggests that the soles of your boots are "wore  
through";  
And he hints that the state of your trousers and socks is—  
"Well, scarcely the thing for a gent, sir, like you."  
But rather than put them for good on the shelf  
He will sacrifice pride and will wear them himself.

And your bedmaker tells you the marvellous story  
How her masters of old were so wonderful free,  
That they finished each term and departed in glory  
"With a pound, which I never 'ad arst 'em, for me."  
And she adds, which is plain, that by common consent  
"A gent up at Cambridge is allus a gent."



Old Cerberus smiles with a mildness quite foreign  
On the bold ones who venture to walk on the grass ;  
While he stands at the gateway and pockets his florin,  
And allows even jokes against porters to pass.  
For porters, I note, though their natures be firm,  
Relax like the rest at the end of the term.

There are tips for the bootblack, the cook from the  
kitchen,  
The boy who runs errands, the tout from the Lane,  
Till you wish yourself safely at Stortford or Hitchin,  
And address them in language less polished than plain.  
But, bless their kind hearts ! they object not a jot,  
And you'll find in the end that you *must* tip the lot.

Then your tutor bestows his tutorial blessing,  
Though he begs you to read on a regular plan ;  
And, his voice growing cordial, he ends by expressing  
His regards to your father, " that excellent man."  
Yet somehow that excellent father looks black  
When the tutor encloses his bill in the vac.

And your Dean, the grim tyrant, the truculent gater,  
Refrains, smiling gently, from useless advice ;  
And avoids, like a skilled conversational skater,  
Such subjects as hauls, which are very thin ice.  
For, your *exit* signed, he may whistle in vain  
When you've taken your ticket and left by the train.

And it's hey for our homes, for our fathers, our mothers,  
For the sisters who drag us to concerts or balls,  
For the horse and the gun that suit some, while the  
others

Spend their time in a club and their money on stalls.  
Farewell ! when the time and the money are spent,  
May we all meet at Cambridge again in the Lent.

## JANUARY

### *Ad Redeuntes*

CAMBRIDGE again ! and once again  
The spacious courts, the ancient halls,  
The daily tramp of eager men,  
The nightly hush of hoary walls ;

The sacred lawns of shaven grass,  
The echoes of the narrow street,  
The shout, the laugh, the clinking glass,  
The haunts where youth and pleasure meet ;

The hazy commons filled with life,  
The crawling river thick with boats,  
The ceaseless, ardent, friendly strife,  
The coloured flash of scarves and coats ;

The youths too careless of their fate,  
The Dean's reproach, the Proctor's frown,  
The Porter prowling at the gate,  
The sober suits of cap and gown ;



The talk of books, of sport, of wine,  
While hearts are warm, though winds be cold,  
The friends whose life is part of mine,  
The loyal hands I love to hold ;—

All this is Cambridge ; and I hear  
The cheerful frolic and the din  
Of those who sped the parting year,  
And bring the new with laughter in.

. . . . .

Yet, O you third-year Man beware ;  
Read while you can ; turn night to day ;  
A brooding blackness fills the air,  
The Tripos waits you in the May.

And, O ye Freshmen, safely past  
The terrors of the Little-Go,  
The changing terms will fly too fast,  
Though here and there the days be slow

Like you I smiled and quaffed my ale,  
And scorned like you the far exam. ;  
Yet here I tremble and grow pale,  
And ghost-like haunt the winding Cam.

. . . . .

Beshrew the writing on the wall !  
I know the hateful words by heart—  
“ The smile must fade, the light must fall ;  
Too soon the best of friends must part.”

So, Jones, my gyp, bestir thyself—  
One glowing night from work I steal—  
Go fetch me from my gyp-room shelf  
The bottles with the yellow seal ;

And lay my cloth for five or six ;  
To-night we meet once more and dine,  
And sink the Tripes and its tricks  
And all our cares beneath the wine.

## JUNE

### *The May*

WELCOME, thrice Welcome ; our Cambridge unbends  
again,

Filled with the patter of feminine feet.

June for the rest of the year makes amends again ;

Bright is each court and delightful each street.

Mothers come guarding our sisters and cousins too ;

All with their trunks and intending to stay,

Trooping by twos and by threes and by dozens too ;

Welcome to Cambridge, ye flowers of the May.

How shall we suit all the tastes of our visitors,

Loving the oar or adoring the bat ?

How find an answer for charming inquisitors,

Doubting of this or inquiring of that ?

Mabel, whose hair has a glint of the sun in it ;

Beta, whose brow is as clear as the day ;


Maud, who likes everything best with some fun in it—

How shall we treat them, these Nymphs of the May ?

See how they stream through the courts of our colleges,  
Ripple through Trinity, flow into John's,  
Awed by our tales of unspeakable knowledges  
Stored in the heads of ineffable dons.  
Yet if I hint that the dons class and schedule us  
Only by work, will they credit? Not they.  
Why are you always so sweetly incredulous,  
Maids, who beguile us from books in the May?

Maud with the dimples (Oh Maud, what a flirt you are;  
Heart-traps are fixed in such dimples as these)  
Smiles when I tell her that Wisdom and Virtue are  
Gated for ever with Honour at Caius.  
Dick who's my friend and her favourite brother—I  
Hate him for this—says "it's only his way :  
Don't you believe him, he's winking the other eye."  
Brothers are always *de trop* in the May.

King's with its chapel—the style's perpendicular—,  
Clare with its bridge of uncountable balls ;  
Grass plots whose guardians are far too particular,  
Fountains and gateways and towers and halls.  
Luncheons and teas, where the talk sometimes flags a  
bit—  
Hosts over anxious are shy and *distracts* ;  
Walks in the Backs, where one pair always lags a bit ;  
Such are our sights and our jaunts in the May.



Then we hire—prices are shockingly dear—a boat,  
    Splash down to Ditton, and mostly get wet.  
Beta informs us she knows how to steer a boat,  
    Beta's mamma thinks we're sure to upset.  
“Here come the eights; why you're on them already  
    boys,  
    Stroke, pick it up, now your gaining, hurray !  
Harder and harder, swing out, keep her steady boys—  
    Bumped them !” first blood for our crew in the May.

Dinners and dances,—sweet Maud's my affinity ;  
    Girls in their muslins and men in their pumps.  
Kings or the Masons, the Hall or First Trinity ;  
    Talk of the crews and the blues and the bumps.  
Ah, Father Time, Father Time, you're deceiving us ;  
    Hours fly too swiftly, oh bid them delay.  
Why should they flout us by mournfully leaving us,  
    Lonely and lost at the end of the May ?






## **Laus Ludorum**



## APRIL

APRIL, the month of sunshine flecked with showers, the month of birds and bards and buds and bowers ; the month when maidens who but lately made brightness within their schoolroom's cloistered shade, now with their hair done up, their lessons undone, train for the dizzy maze of dancing London, and, weaned from bread and butter, books and blushes, dream of the coming season and its crushes, while each one sees herself, an envied girl, led to the altar by a Duke or Earl. Pleased with the presents she in fancy hears her father's blessing, sees her mother's tears, changes her dress the while the bridesmaids prattle, hears the farewells, the cheers, the rice's rattle, as in a whirl, the ceremony over, she and her happy husband start for Dover.


Now youths who feel the coming of the Spring, their Winter garments of repentance fling. New force from vernal influence recruiting, their fancy turns to thoughts of Summer-suiting, gay suits of dittoes which shall take the eye next term upon the King's Parade or High, tan boots or shoes and giddy fancy socks all parti-coloured and with lovely clocks. As though their means



were gloriously ample hansoms and plays and restaurants they sample ; saunter up Bond Street (nothing could be rasher), visit their tailor and their haberdasher ; grow, as the painful total daily mounts, shorter of "ready," longer in accounts ; weighed down by debt they yet keep up their pecker, and much deplete the fatherly exchequer.

Now too, if Easter be a tardy comer, we see some sports that better suit the Summer. Now to the Queen's Club in successive surges from every quarter, lo, a crowd converges. Parson and sportsman, undergrad. and don, behold them troop to far West Kensington. Of rain or wind they make but little fuss ; a runner's wind is what they most discuss. What care have they, although their forms they jam in a perspiring crowd, if they can talk of stamina, note every athlete's form, his length of stride, foretell the odd event and much beside, and quite forgetful of the hours that pass know each recorded time on path or grass ?

And oh ye men of dark blue or of light blue (whiche'er ye wear be sure it is the right blue) ; ye distance-men, ye hurdlers and ye sprinters, of pluck unsparing and of pace no stinters, ye who with arms outstretched or fingers grounded, started like greyhounds when the pistol sounded ; ye jumpers who with all your young limbs twisted leapt at the bar and either struck or missed it ; or sped as by an impulse of despair, flew like winged figures through the whistling air, and, with your eyes a-gleam, your chests expanded, cleared



twenty feet or more before you landed,—ye men of spikes, in short, whom fame pursues garbed in your full or in your semi-blues, take it from me, ye much enduring boys, that life can bring you no superber joys than when, released from tutors and from deans, you swiftly run or greatly jump at Queen's.

Now sixteen youngsters in their pride of muscle prepare at Putney for a fearful tussle. Two puny tyrants of the coxswain-tribe whom threats deter not nor caresses bribe, hold in their hands, those ruthless hands, the fate, each, as he steers it, of his labouring eight. Through the long weeks these men must meekly train, their style as pretty as their food is plain. Primed with small beer and filled with prunes and rices, they tempt each day the waves of Cam or Isis. Eggs they may eat but not the tasty rasher who to Clayhithe proceed or to the Lasher, and tarts and jams and *entrées* are taboo to those who daily row in either crew.

Their dinner-courses are but few and short ; long are their courses of another sort, the sort, I mean, that makes them puff and blow, their faces purple, as they swing and row, while on the bank that pitiless discarder, their coach, shouts:—"Now then, let her have it harder." Lost to the world with growing grief and pain, in one last burst their very souls they strain, till with quick strokes and breath both quick and wheezy, at last they stop, the coxswain calling "Easy."

Transferred to Putney, with their blues awarded,

they see their deeds at greater length recorded. The daily papers all describe the crews in full detail and all take different views, and oarsmen, whose tense nerves grow daily tighter purchase the paper and deride the writer. Down Putney's High Street in their coloured coats behold them stride to man their brittle boats. Gathered in crowds, with unconcealed delight the Putney urchins hail the glorious sight, salute the haughty oarsmen and with glee cheer for their favourite University. "Kimebridge," for instance, they declare a "winner," Oxford *per contra* being dubbed a "sinner"; beg them with alternating praise and scoff either to "keep it on" or "tike it off," and try in vain by every urchin's trick to win a smile, or, failing that, a kick. But the proud Blues, self-centred and serene, move irresponsive through the bustling scene, launch their light ship and take their places in it, race the scratch eights at forty to the minute, return and dress and dine, play pool and creep each to his bed for nine good hours of sleep.

At last, while crowd to crowd responsive roars, the boats race by, a gleam of feathered oars. Far in advance the very air is humming with shouts of "Now they've started, now they're coming." Eight tortured oarsmen straining for the lead whom eight more strong or fortunate precede; two arrow-ships for racing well designed; four steamers lumbering tardily behind, a shout, a flash—the vision disappears, and that is all one either sees or hears.

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Fill then the wine-cup and, with sparkling eyes, drink to the race and all that it implies. Let whoso will pursue for sordid pelf some petty object, thinking but of self. These men endured, like brother joined to brother, each for his club and all for one another, intent to be through every change of weather, not eight mere units, but a crew together.




## THE VOICE OF THE THAMES

LEAVE, dweller in the smoke-bound street,  
Your native London's ceaseless noise.  
With aching head and weary feet  
Turn from the town's delusive joys.  
On dusty terrace, grimy square,  
A dismal pall seems settling down ;  
Be not the Season's slave, and dare,  
Oh town-bred man, to leave the town.

The town can spare you ; it may chance  
The Park will fill without your aid ;  
And still at many a matron's dance  
Moist man will whirl with panting maid.  
Vast dinners still will be as slow,  
The night will still be turned to day,  
And all the giddy round will go  
As wild and well with you away.

But here the days are passing fair,  
The sun shines bright, the leaves are green ;  
Cool on your forehead breathes the air,  
The very smoke seems fresh and clean.



And over all the winding miles,  
Where erst his foaming torrents ran,  
The clear, calm Thames breaks forth in smiles  
Of welcome to the London man.

Bend to your oars, away, away !  
Then rest awhile, or deftly steer  
Where topped with rainbow clouds of spray  
The waters tumble o'er the weir.  
Nor scorn the man whom, moored for hours,  
Nor failure daunts nor jeers affront,  
Who sits, unheeding sun or showers,  
A fishless angler in a punt.

Then, when at eve the ringdove's call  
Is hushed upon the wooded hill,  
And slowly lengthening shadows fall  
On field and stream, and all is still,  
Drift homewards, thanking Heaven that made  
You free to dream awhile your dream  
In this fair scene of sun and shade,  
On gentle Thames's crystal stream.

## A TRINITY BOATING SONG

ALL hail ! ye men from Trinity, who sport the old dark  
blue,  
Who man the brittle cedar ship and sweep your oar-  
blades through ;  
Who mark it well and far behind, and make the finish  
ring, .  
And shoot your hands like lightning out, and slowly,  
slowly swing ;  
Now fling your ancient banner forth ; Dame Fortune  
smooths her frowns  
When she sees your golden Lion with his triple gear of  
crowns ;  
Reach out, reach out and keep it long, oh men of ship  
and tub,  
Though the stroke be two-and-forty, for the honour of  
your Club.

### *Chorus*

So it's steady boys and swing to it,  
And lift her as you spring to it :  
Now, now you're fairly driving her, by Jupiter she  
jumps.

And the men who follow after  
Shall recite with joy and laughter  
All the glory of your story and the record of your  
bumps.

Ye cricketers, your runs mount up while brightly shines  
the sun ;  
With rain in quite another sense ye have to cut and  
run.

But us nor native hurricane nor transatlantic storm  
Can force to quit our daily toil, our daily dose of form.  
The rain may pour, the wind may blow—they pour and  
blow in vain,  
With equal hearts we face the wind, with equal hearts  
the rain.  
And when the work is past and done, and night begins  
to fall,  
We pile the plate and fill the glass, and tell the tale in  
hall.

They cannot know, who lounge and loaf, the fierce  
exultant glow  
That warms the heart and stirs the pulse when eight  
men really row,  
When the banks go wild with roaring, and the roar  
becomes a yell,  
And the bowmen feel her dancing as she lifts upon the  
swell ;

And the crowd in chaos blending rend the welkin with  
advice—

“Swing out, you’ve gained, you’re gaining, you must get  
them in a trice.”

Till with one last stroke we do it, and the coxswain’s  
face grows bright,

And it’s “Easy all, my bonny boys, you’ve made your  
bump to-night.”

I met a solid rowing friend, and asked about the race,

“How fared it with your wind,” I said, “when stroke  
increased the pace ?

“You swung it forward mightily, you heaved it greatly  
back ;

“Your muscles rose in knotted lumps, I almost heard  
them crack.

“And while we roared and rattled too, your eyes were  
fixed like glue,

“What thoughts went flying through your mind, how  
fared it, Five, with you ?”

But Five made answer solemnly, “I heard them fire a  
gun,

“No other mortal thing I knew until the race was  
done.”

Then shout for old First Trinity, and let your song be  
heard

Not less for those who proudly wear the blue and white  
of Third.

One kindly mother claims us all, she bids us play our  
parts

As men whose Clubs are separate, while friendship joins  
their hearts.

We ply the oar in rivalry, and in the mimic fray  
With eager zest and dogged pluck we battle through the  
day.

But when the gallant fight is o'er, united we can stand,  
And hold our own in name and fame, but clasp a  
foeman's hand.

*Chorus*

So it's steady boys and swing to it,  
And lift her as you spring to it:  
Now, now you're fairly driving her, by Jupiter she  
jumps.

And the men who follow after  
Shall recite with joy and laughter  
All the glory of your story and the record of your  
bumps.

## THE OARSMAN'S FAREWELL TO HIS OAR

FAREWELL, dear companion of labour and pastime,

My hands shall encircle your handle no more.

This day on the Thames we were joined for the last time ;

Our last racing stroke has been rowed, oh my oar.

And thus of the story that bound us together,

That made you my servant and kept you my friend

'Mid the chances and changes of temper and weather,

The last word is spoken, and now comes the end.

Many oars have I had—lo ! these cups are a token—

Since first a raw Freshman I splashed in a crew ;

Their shafts may be warped and their blades may be  
broken,

But their staunchness lived on to be centred in you.

Lo ! all these old oars that I lost with or won with

Return to remind me of failure or fame.

The traditions are yours of those blades I have done with ;

The wood may have changed, but the soul is the same.

Great days of rejoicing and strength and endeavour,

When the blood galloped swift, and the muscles were  
taut,

THE OARSMAN'S FAREWELL TO HIS OAR 67

So brightly they shone, that are vanished for ever,  
My heart from their radiance a glamour has caught.  
And still, though the grey in my hair be increasing,  
Though the joints may be stiffened, the sinews  
unstrung,  
The brightness is round me, and still without ceasing  
I think and remember and dream and am young.

One day I recall when we hardly were ready,  
The starter—who was he? odd rot him!—said “Go!”  
And we splashed and we rolled all to bits and unsteady,  
While some of us went and the rest shouted “No!”  
But the cox in alarm cried “You must make her go, men;  
Now, now let her have it!” and though we felt dead,  
With a burst and a rush we just collared our foemen,  
And held them and passed them and finished ahead.

And once in a Four—but I wouldn't have missed it,  
That day when disaster diminished our pace—  
We perceived in despair that our steerage was twisted,  
But we scorned to give up, and continued the race.  
And our bow and our two made alternate concession;  
One worked while the other he held himself in;  
Their skill got the better of fortune's oppression;  
They kept the boat straight, and we managed to win.

The toils of long training how well I remember—  
The boat was like lead and our limbs were as wax;



68 THE OARSMAN'S FAREWELL TO HIS OAR

In the east winds of March, in the fogs of November,  
When to row seemed a torture with stretchers for  
racks.

Yet all these old aches are a part of our glory,  
These toils are a treasure by distance made plain;  
Recalled and renewed they give point to our story  
Of trials endured, and endured not in vain.

And all the old friends that I chaffed with or chaffed at,  
Staunch oarsmen and gallant in sunshine or cloud;  
Our Dick, our strong six, who looked daggers when  
laughed at,  
Our Tom, who smiled sweeter as laughter grew loud,  
And Jack, who took life as if life never mattered,  
And Mac, of our crew the keen captain and star—  
Long since by our fates we were hopelessly scattered,  
But still they seem near me, though severed so far.

And I, of their band the last racing survivor,  
I have rowed my last race, and I step from the ranks.  
When a light ship is launched and they swing her and  
drive her  
Henceforth I shall watch how it's done from the banks.  
Never more, oh my oar, shall we grip the beginning,  
Never more shall our finish ring clear as a bell;  
We have done with our losing and done with our  
winning—  
Farewell, true companion and partner, farewell!

## FATHER THAMES'S TIP, 1900

It chanced last week that wandering by the marge  
Of Thames's tide—its bleakness made me shiver—  
I passed a creek conveniently large,  
Where lay much spoil collected from the river—  
Hencoops and biscuit-tins, and cats whose throttles  
Were tightly bound, and hats and boots and bottles.

And many another waif that once stood high,  
But, ah, how fortune, fickle jade, upsets 'em !  
Exalts at first their honour to the sky,  
Next moment turns them into common jetsam—  
When, as I mused, a hale and ancient party  
Rose from the ooze and gave a greeting hearty !


Right well I knew him : 'twas the River god ;  
His beard was matted and his forehead wrinkled ;  
And from his tangled hair with every nod  
A shower of mud upon the bank was sprinkled.  
He wore a tunic—nothing could be damper—  
And on his head a fragmentary hamper.

"Great Thames!" I cried, "you come upon the nick ;  
But, oh, speak soft, lest others should remark you,  
And tell me truly which shall do the trick,  
Which shall be first—the azure or the dark hue ?  
Since for the crews each day your ebb and flow trace  
The course they row, say which shall win the boat-race."

"I never bet," the god replied, "myself,  
Although I bear their barks upon my deep tide.  
Let others quote the odds and aim at pelf—  
I simply do my work with spring or neap tide.  
But as for rowing, why of course it's true, Sir,  
I can't help knowing just a thing or two, Sir.

"I hear the laboured breathing of the eight,  
The coxswain shouts, the finish sharply ringing.  
And some, I note, are generally late,  
Some fail in drive and others fail in swinging.  
The while the air grows blue with loud reproaches  
Hurled at the crews by megaphoning coaches.

"And as night's shepherdess at morn is pale,  
Her light grows thin and all her starry flocks wane,  
So, when imposed upon the balanced scale,  
Thinner and lighter grows each tiny coxswain.  
Fed upon husks, but ever uncomplaining,  
He fades and fades, and thus fulfils his training.



"All this I see, and thus of course I know;  
As to the race itself and which will win it,  
My mind's made up, my judgment's fixed, and so  
With two crews rowing, only one crew's in it;  
And that"—— but as he spoke the god grew frightened,  
Dived to the depths and left me unenlightened.

But in his place a bubble rose and burst,  
And seemed to speak "that crew will prove the  
stronger,  
Which shows more life and gets to Mortlake first  
In shorter time, its rowing being longer.  
And, therefore, since you want to know the right blue,  
*Keep the tip dark, but go and back the light blue.*"

## IO TRIUMPHE !

### *A Ballad of the Association Football Match of 1890*

OH, woe is me for Oxford ; her gallants issued forth ;  
From east and west her friends poured out, from south  
    they came, and north ;  
Their faces gleamed with triumph, their button-holes  
    were gay  
With many a dark blue ribbon and many a violet spray ;  
And, oh, their speech was lightsome, as on their way  
    they sped.  
“Will our men beat the Cambridge lot? They’ll do it  
    on their head.  
Remember last term how they bragged, yet when they  
    came to town,  
Like corn before the reaping hook their Rugby men  
    went down.  
Though Cotterill, their Colossus, be broad, and strong,  
    and tall,  
He shall not overstride our Rhodes, he shall not daunt  
    our Hall ;

Veitch may be fast, and Hossack neat, and Gosling be of  
use,

Yet, thanks to Heaven, we still possess a Currey for that  
Goose;

Though Stanbrough speed across the field as speeds the  
flying scud,

Their Henfrey cannot play to-day, he only plays in  
mud;

Nay, how shall Bolus 'kick away,' or shine in 'fisting  
out,'

When Brookes and Disbrowe fail, and Wells with Paull  
is put to rout?

With Wilson as our whirling sword, with Wilkinson for  
shield,

Oh, friends, the fight is ours to-day; so onward to the  
field."

Thus spake the blithe Oxonians, and on and ever on  
The dark blue wave came surging to far West Kensington;  
And through the open gateways by thousands flocked they  
in,

To watch the fierce contending teams, to see their  
brothers win.

Yet Cambridge, too, had sent her sons, dear Cambridge  
of the fogs,

Dear Cambridge of the crawling Cam with drainage  
choked and dogs;

Cambridge, whose Senior Wranglers all are bearded like  
a pard,

Where men eat sausages, and buy their butter by the  
yard.

She, too, had sent her band of sons to London town to  
see

How nobly Cotterill led his ten to goals and victory.

It is the hour; the teams come forth amidst a solemn  
hush;

Thousands stand waiting for the start, the conflict, and  
the rush.

Cotterill has won the toss; he kicks; now Gosling,  
follow fast;

Now Veitch and Stanbrough run with him—well  
middled, nobly passed!

See, tearing Currey has the ball; you, Disbrowe, mark  
that man,

He must not reach our goal to-day, so stop him if you  
can.

And, oh, ye two from Jesus, what though ye be not  
cooks,

“Feed” all your forwards, feed them well, neat Hossack,  
agile Brooks.

The task is hard, yet ply your legs, and if you fail to  
feed,

Still watch the Dark Blue forwards, still check their fiery  
speed.

. . . . .  
Thus fiercely raged the battle. Brave Bolus kept the  
goal,



Brave Bolus of the piercing eye, that tall and dauntless  
soul.

The Oxford shots are straight and true, but Bolus stops  
them all—

Sure there is magic in his hands, or witchcraft on the ball.  
He fists them here, he fists them there, and some he kicks  
away,

Ye cannot break that stout defence, nor beat him down  
to-day.

Not firmer stands, amidst the surf, the spray-besprinkled  
rock,

Than stands that iron Jesus man against the Oxford  
shock,

And though with ceaseless ardour still they charge and  
pant and toil,

Like waves that dash upon a cliff these Oxford men  
recoil,

And all the watching thousands shout in one prolonged  
acclaim

How nobly Bolus foiled them all, how well he saved the  
game.

Now run your fastest Wilson, the time runs quickly too;  
Much have you done and bravely charged, but much  
remains to do.


Now Currey try your rush again, now Farrant urge the  
ball,

Wells meets you and defeats you still, you cannot con-  
quer Paull.





Some twenty minutes still are yours, charge, charge, and  
charge again,  
How shall such courage come to nought, such gallantry  
be vain?  
Brave Bolus may not always stop, so, while your strength  
endures,  
In one fierce, furious rush combine, and, oh, the game is  
yours!  
So said, so done; the rush is made, our men seem  
strangely slow—  
Apollo doth not always bend, god though he be, his bow—  
A kick, a shout, a miss? no, no, the shot speeds swift  
and true,  
And Oxford yells in triumph, for Rhodes has kicked it  
through.  
Yet did not our men falter, the thought came to their  
mind,  
How Cambridge once were last at Barnes, two lengths, I  
trow, behind;  
How gallant Pitman roused his crew, caught Oxford on  
the nap,  
And with a hero's effort closed at last that fearful gap.  
And how, though Oxford spurted too, in one terrific  
burst  
He left his foemen standing still, and past the post the  
first.  
What Pitman did upon the Thames, shall Cotterill do on  
land.



A quarter of an hour remains, quick, comrades, take your stand.

And now the cheers swell louder, see, see they join the fight,

Now Gosling speeds with Cotterill in a rush upon the right.

Veitch has it now, the brawny-backed whose hair is black as coal,

On, on, like lightning, see he kicks—whoo-oo! he's kicked a goal!

Now is their spirit broken, six minutes still remain,

Now Cotterill like a storm bursts forth, and Cambridge scores again.

Next Stanbrough kicks another goal, and so with three to one,

While shouts of "Cambridge" rend the sky, the hard-fought game is done.

Now cheer we all for Cotterill, who led his gallant ten,  
And cheer for each and all of them, those sturdy Cambridge men.

And, oh, thou kindly mother, dear Cambridge, be thou proud

Of those who sped the flying ball, and "passed" in any crowd.

Grey time must steal them from thy arms, yet though the years may roll,

They still shall live in story, these guardians of the goal.



### A. C. S. v. C. S. C.

[In an article in *The Forum*, Mr. Swinburne said of C. S. Calverley that he was "monstrously overrated and preposterously over-praised."]

"PREPOSTEROUSLY over-praised!"

A poet speaks, the world hath heard;  
We bow, submissive but amazed,  
Our heads beneath the awful word.

And yet, and yet—I know not why,  
We loved him well, nor deemed it wrong  
To read with unreproving eye  
The bright, but Swinburne-hated, song

Of him who wrote as C. S. C.,  
Whose gay good-humour made us smile,  
Who never thought it base to be  
A jester with a perfect style.

Not his the turgid, foaming line  
That swells, tempestuous and immense,  
To break upon the rockbound shrine,  
The sheer and solid walls of sense.

He never grew through length of days  
To fawn, where formerly he frowned,  
Nor stripped in wanton mood the bays  
From brows his younger hands had crowned.

And therefore (though these windy taunts  
Should ban the friend I humbly bless),  
The braggart tongue that raves and vaunts,  
The tumid flouts of A. C. S.,

That feather-headed, froth-mouthed man,  
They matter not a jot to me.  
I simply end as I began,  
And read and love my C. S. C.

## THE BROKEN BRIDGE

I KNEW a Trinity scholar once,  
A Trinity scholar of some repute;  
    With a conical head, and thin, straight hair,  
    And a face that was foolish beyond compare—  
A face, in fact, like the face of a dunce,  
And a stare like the stare of a senseless brute;  
    And when I beheld him, I thought, "It's plain  
    He's a hulking lout with an idiot's brain.

I was doubly wrong, for the man had two—  
Two brains joined by a bridge between;  
    One he used as a threshing floor,  
    The other he kept as a sort of store.  
And every fact that he stored was new,  
Cleared of its husk and bright and clean;  
    And he labelled and packed and arranged them all  
    Ready for use at a moment's call.

And whenever he wrote his pen ran fast,  
Like a ship with a favouring wind behind;  
    And he finished his papers and went away  
    With a sneer for the rest who were forced to stay.

And many an envious look we cast  
At the wonderful man with the matchless mind,  
    Who, whatever the subject, beat the lot,  
And romped in first in a common trot.

Then a medical congress came by train,  
Armed with cephalo-microscopes ;  
    And they prodded him here and tapped him there,  
    And shaved his occiput bald and bare ;  
And wrote of his singular double brain  
In dogmas as certain as any pope's.  
    And they each described (in an interview)  
    How little the rest of the congress knew.

So matters progressed, till one May-week,  
When the double-brained man was reading hard  
    He came on a problem of arc and line,  
    And he threshed it out and he sifted fine,  
And loaded it up, and, so to speak,  
Started his truck for the further yard,  
    And it rumbled along, till suddenly, hey  
    Presto ! *the bridge between gave way.*

. . . . .

And except for his bridge, the man's the same—  
Just what he was ere the bridge went crash ;  
    And one of his brains is as full of tips  
    As the docks in London are crammed with ships.

But *now* he's a fool, and he puts the blame  
On the ponderous problem that caused the smash;  
For the bridge being shattered beyond a doubt,  
There's no way of getting his knowledge out.

System on system and plan on plan,  
Packed and docketed, there they lie;  
All the philosophies, A to Z,  
That split the commonplace, one-brained head;  
Schemes to explain the descent of man,  
Or fit him to scale the starry sky.  
And no ray pierces the brooding gloom,  
Where the dust lies thick in the silent room.

So there's the story; it's true, I know—  
True and clear as the noonday sun?  
And it's quite a respectable story too,  
Which is more than most are, however true.  
And the moral is this:—Though your work be slow,  
And your brain, like mine, be the usual one,  
You have much more chance of a double first  
Than a two-brained marvel whose bridge is burst.



## THE NARROWING CAGE

THIS is the tale of an ancient Don ;  
I remember him well some years ago,  
    So well that I seem to see him now,  
    With his drooping head and his furrowed brow,  
As he paced in the shadows where no ray shone  
With a dragging step that was dull and slow,  
    And eyes that looked not to left or right,  
    But were fixed on the ground and shunned the light.

His back was bent and his beard was grey,  
And the hair on his head was sparse and long ;  
    His boots were worn and his coat was frayed,  
    And his bones seemed thin as a razor-blade ;  
And wherever he went on his dismal way  
He froze the hearts of our youthful throng,  
    And after he passed the very air  
    Seemed choked and dead with a dead despair.

And often at night, when the lights shone out  
From many a room in the dim old Court,  
    Hither and thither, from wall to wall,  
    From Hall to Chapel, from Chapel to Hall,

The bent, gaunt figure would move about,  
While the Dons, his fellows, were drinking port;  
And he muttered and sighed, and sighed again,  
Like a spirit of woe in a world of pain.

The man was learned, had written books,  
And a German professor had come from Bonn  
With a huge brown beard, and a small black box,  
Containing a brush and a few odd socks;  
And he skilfully baited his Teuton hooks,  
And angled for notes from the ancient Don;  
But he failed, and just as he came he went  
With his temper gone and his money spent.

Now this is the tale: he had once been young—  
Young, God save us, as you or I;  
And his crisp, close curls had a golden hue,  
And his laugh was light and his eyes were blue;  
And he moved with a jest on his careless tongue  
Through a crowd of adorers, his head raised high,  
In the chorus of praise that his friends would sing;  
“You are strong and beautiful; reign as king.”

Wisdom's precipice high and sheer  
Firm with unfaltering feet he scaled;  
Prizes and triumphs, great and small,  
Honours and wreaths—he grasped them all;

What should he have but a great career,  
The man who could reach where others failed,  
Destined to soar on the wings of fame  
To a summit crowned with a deathless name?

He felt, he knew that the world was his—  
His, if he willed, to the farthest strand:  
The earth beneath and the sky above,  
Eloquence, learning, statecraft, love—  
All that has been and all that is,  
He held it all in his hollow hand;  
The limitless spaces deep and still,  
All were his for his soul to fill.

The blood coursed fast through his throbbing veins  
In a fever of high exultant mirth;  
And he cried in his joy, "I can rise as far  
As the glittering peaks of the morning star;  
I can reach deep under the wind-swept plains,  
And pluck at the heart of the patient earth;  
Courage, beauty and youth divine,  
And the strength of a host in arms are mine."

. . . . .

The world wagged on and the years rolled by;  
Others struggled from day to day;  
And he who had flashed for a moment, bright  
As a star that falls on a winter night,

Fading fast as it cleaves the sky,  
Wore in darkness his life away;  
And of all the crowd who had hailed him great  
Few had a thought for his dreary fate.

And he?—Well, this is the tale they tell:  
He rose one day, and the world seemed dim,  
And he paced through the busy Cambridge street  
With slow, dull, faltering, weary feet;  
And all at once—for he saw it well—  
There in the distance in front of him,  
Dark and frowning, and steep and tall,  
Some one had raised a barrier-wall.

And he turned in horror and hurried back;  
And, horror of horrors! a wall stood there,  
At the point where his walk had been begun,  
Hiding the face of the friendly sun.  
And the sky at the noontide hour was black,  
And faster he hurried, and grew aware  
That men had vanished, and all alone  
*He was caught and caged in a square of stone.*

You laugh, for the walls, you say, were dreams,  
Bodiless phantoms born to fade:  
Yes, but dreams that a mind could feel,  
Built of granite and bound with steel;

And truth was gone, like the last faint gleams  
Of a day that wanes and is lost in shade;  
And the desolate square became a den  
Filled with the cries of hopeless men.

And day followed day: like a ghost distraught  
He moved in his rusty, tattered gown;  
And his eyes grew dull and his body thin,  
As the walls crept closer and closer in—  
Closer in on the victim caught  
In a narrowing cage that pressed him down;  
Till at last they gripped him on every side  
In the shape of a coffin—and so he died.

This is the tale that was told to me;  
And carefully, just as I heard it told,  
This tale of the ancient Don I knew,  
Just as I heard it, I tell to you.  
You and I took a low degree;  
The flights we attempt are rarely bold.  
So I hope we may reach a humdrum age,  
Nor perish at last in a closing cage.

## EVIDENT FAILURE

*With apologies to Robert Browning's "Apparent Failure."*

[“We are about to lose Cavendish College.”\*—CAMBRIDGE  
PAPER.]

No, I won't save it; seventh months since  
I passed through Cambridge, stopped a day  
To see your young men play the prince;  
Saw, lunched, enjoyed, and went my way.  
Walking that champagne luncheon off,  
I sought the station, you surmise,  
Passed Freshmen, Senior, Junior Soph,  
Who looked at me with some surprise,  
So sauntered till—what met my eyes?

Only the red-bricked Cavendish,  
The College where your babes are kept.  
I thought I heard a birch's swish,  
I know the drowsy porter slept.

\* Cavendish College, an institution intended to accommodate boys of a tenderer age than the rest of their fellow-undergraduates, was “wound up” at the end of 1891, after a struggling existence of fifteen years.

One can slip by in such a case ;  
I did, and boldly entering, stalked  
Through all the mournful, desolate place.  
Past where the tennis-courts were chalked  
Then tow'rds the building's self I walked.

First corridors; the hall came next,  
That Hartington was thankful for,  
So opened it; oh, how it vexed  
My soul that men should thus abhor  
So vast a building ! Just a few  
Pale boys about the place were strown,  
Not half enough to make a crew,  
With scarce a club to call their own,  
Sadly, severely left alone.

Poor lads, God made, and all for this !  
Each had his tidy little crib,  
His bowl, and, lest the food should miss  
The mouth, for every one a bib.  
Each had a nurse to give him care,  
A hoop, a room for play or rest.  
They might have waited, gone to Clare,  
Or found in Caius or King's a nest,  
Unless the Unattached seemed best !

How did it happen, my poor boy ?  
You wanted to be Pitman, stroke

As he did, have an oar for toy,  
And could not, so your heart-strings broke?  
You here would be a Poloist,  
A riding Blood inured to spills,  
A "Pittite"! Bah, you won't be missed;  
You're bilious, so they gave you pills,  
Pilled you, in fact: go pay your bills.

And this? he never read at all;  
A cricketer, but not a Blue.  
What made him love the cricket ball?  
He could not slog as others do.  
Sam Woods took wickets; you took what?  
Not prizes, though you looked so proud.  
And some got through, but you were not  
Amongst them; you were not allowed  
The Poll degree, but wholly ploughed.

It's better being tall than short,  
Exceptions merely prove the rule;  
Three sides don't make a Cambridge court.  
My own thought is a public school  
Were best for boys so lately breeched;  
They need more last to get a First.  
That, spite of all by pedants preached,  
Such schemes as this are doomed to burst,  
And what began bad must end worst.



## TO THE MASTER OF TRINITY

*A congratulatory Ode on the birth of his son (1889)*

DR. BUTLER, may I venture without seeming too officious  
To congratulate you warmly on a birthday so auspicious?  
The event is surely worthy that I too should raise my  
voice at it,

And proclaim as best I may that like all others I rejoice  
at it.

I am late—I own it humbly—but from censure crave  
immunity;

I should have wished you joy before, but lacked the  
opportunity.

And you too, fair young mistress of our ancient Lodge  
at Trinity,\*

Though to the usual natal ode my rhymes have small  
affinity,

Though good wishes from an unknown friend may  
savour of temerity,

\* Mrs. Butler (then Miss Agneta Ramsay) was Senior Classic in 1887. Dr. Butler, the Master of Trinity, was Senior Classic in 1855.

Yet accept both them and my excuse for wishing them—  
sincerity.

And the son! with two such parents this small member  
of our college

Must be, unlike the ruck of us, a paragon of knowledge;  
Armed cap-à-pie with wisdom like the goddess in the  
stories;

A human sort of letters which we term *humaniores*;  
A kind of tiny scholiast who'll startle his relations  
With his luminous suggestions and his subtle emen-  
dations;

A lexicon in arms, with all the syntax grafted in on him;  
A Gradus ad Parnassum, full of epithet and synonym;  
A Corpus Poetarum, such as classics love to edit, he  
Will furnish, let me hope, a bright example of heredity.  
Though no doubt he'll be a stoic or a modern Pocahontas  
(This allusion is *τι βάρβαρον*) when cutting his *ὀδόντας*;  
Yet *if* he when his teething time approaches should to  
cry elect,

He will cry, I am persuaded, in the purest Attic dialect.  
If a keen desire for nourishment his baby face should  
mottle,

He will *think* "nunc est bibendum"—not, like others,  
"pass the bottle."

Before he doffs his long-clothes, and while scarcely fit to  
wean, he

Will be game to tackle Schliemann on the treasures of  
Mycenæ;

And although his conversation must be chiefly esoteric,  
Yet I warrant, if the truth were known, he often talks  
Homeric;

Then, whilst others merely babble, he will whet his  
infant senses

On a new and striking theory of Greek and Latin tenses.  
He'll eschew his india-rubber ring, vote picture-books  
immoral,

And prefer an hour with Tacitus to rattle or to coral.  
He will subjugate hexameters and conquer elegiacs,  
As easily as Rajah Brooke made mincemeat of the  
Dyaks;

And in struggles with alcaics and iambics, and the rest  
of it,

I will lay a thousand drachmæ Master Butler gets the  
best of it.

And whatever Dr. Jebb may think, he'll look a small  
potato

Should he dare to take this infant on in Æschylus or  
Plato.

Then (forgive me if I mention but a few amongst his  
many tricks)

He will call his father "genitor," his mother "alma  
genetrix,"

At an age when other babies stutter "Pa" or "Ma" or  
"Gra'ma";

He will solve—oh, joy!—the mystery and sense of the  
digamma;

He'll discover by an instinct, though the point is somewhat knotty,  
That in certain cases *πρός* is used, in other cases *πρός*.  
He will know the proper case for every little preposition,  
Will correctly state a certainty or hint at a condition.  
Latin prose will be a game to him; at two he'll take a prize in it,  
With no end of Ciceronian turns and lots of *quippe qui-s* in it.  
With the ablatives so absolute they awe you into silence,  
And such indirect narrations that they wind away a mile hence;  
With the sentences so polished that they shine like housemaid's faces,  
All the words both big and little fixed like features in their places;  
With the moods all strictly accurate, the tenses in their sequences,  
And a taste so truly classical it shudders at infrequencies;  
With some cunning bits of *tam-s* and *quam-s*, and all the little wily sets  
Of *donec-s* and of *quamvis-es*, of *dum-s* and *quin-s* and *scilicet-s*.  
All the imperfections rubbed away, the roughness nicely levelled off,  
Like a sheet of burnished copper with the edges neatly bevelled off.

In short, go search all Europe through, you'll find that in  
Latinity

Not a soul can hold a candle to our Master's son in  
Trinity.

Then he'll write Greek plays by dozens— not such models  
of insipid ease

(Robert Browning, grant me pardon) as the dramas of  
Euripides;

But lines that roll like thunder, Æschylean and Titanic,  
With a saving touch of Sophocles, a dash Aristophanic.  
Not an accent will be wanting, no false quantity will kill  
a line;

There'll be no superfluous particles popped in like *ye* to  
fill a line.

Then if asked to choose a story-book this prodigy will  
nod at us,

And demand the Polyhymnia or the Clio of Herodotus.

At three he'll take a tripos class in Aryan mythology,  
And at four confute all Germany in Roman archæology;  
And if his Teuton rivals print huge quartos to suppress  
him, oh!

I'll back this cyclopædic child, this English duodecimo.

And, bless me! how his cheeks will glow with infantine  
elation,

Should he catch his parents tripping in a classical quota-  
tion!

He'll be, in fact, before he's done with pap-boat and with  
ladle,

The critic's last variety—the critic in the cradle.  
So a health to you, good Master; may the day that  
brought this boy to you  
Be through the years a constant source of happiness and  
joy to you.  
May he have his father's eloquence, be charming as his  
mother,  
And when he grows to wield a bat play cricket like his  
brother.  
I looks towards you, Dr. B., and Mrs. Butler too, sir;  
The infant prodigy as well,—let's drink it in a "brew,"  
sir.  
Take of champagne a magnum, drop some Borage (*that's*  
the stuff) in it,  
With a dash of Cognac, lots of ice and seltzer, *quantum*  
*suff.*, in it;  
And we'll drain this simple mixture ("simple mixture"  
sounds Hibernian),  
And in honour of the classic babe we'll fancy it's Faler-  
nian.

## A DRINKING SONG

COME speed me the flagon, once more we will fill it,  
And pass it with jest and rejoicing again.  
A bumper! no heel-taps! take care not to spill it,  
Each drop is a pleasure, to spill it were pain.  
Then hurrah, boys, hurrah, though old Age come apace,  
Glass in hand we will meet him, a smile on our face.

CHORUS (*repeats last two lines*).

The deuce take philosophers, prating and prosy,  
With their "Death's in the bottle,"—they cannot be  
right,  
Your laughter and song and your cheeks that are rosy,  
All prove they are liars, at least for to-night.  
Then hurrah, boys, hurrah, though old Age come apace,  
Glass in hand we will meet him, a smile on our face.

To the friends that are living, though Fortune has  
sundered  
Their path from our own, we will drink with a cheer.  
Not with us was the fault, it was Fortune that  
blundered—  
To the friends that are absent, I would they were here.

Then hurrah, boys, hurrah, though old Age come apace.  
Glass in hand we will meet him, a smile on our face.

Ah! the good men and true who have left us for ever,  
Whom Death from his ambush tripped up on their way;  
Had the Fates but forborne for a while to dis sever  
Their thread, they perchance had been with us to-day.  
Sing it soft, sing it low, the grim foe comes apace;  
Let us stand to it firmly, nor flinch from his face.

How bright was their laughter, I still seem to hear it;  
How joyous their welcome, how constant their heart:  
And if ever the glum god of sorrow drew near it  
They rallied him roundly and bade him depart.  
Sing it soft, sing it low, the grim foe comes apace;  
Let us stand to it firmly, nor flinch from his face.

But a truce to such sorrow, we're met for a revel  
I will pledge you once more: to Ourselves let it be.  
See, the smile of the wine has sent grief to the devil—  
To ourselves and our loved ones with thirty times  
three.

Then hurrah, boys, hurrah, though old Age come apace,  
Glass in hand we will meet him, a smile on our face.



## TO MY CIGARETTE

My own, my loved, my Cigarette,  
My dainty joy, disguised in tissue,  
What fate can make your slave regret  
The day when first he dared to kiss you?

I had smoked briars, like to most  
Who joy in smoking, and had been a  
Too ready prey to those who boast  
Their bonded stores of Reina Fina.

In honeydew had steeped my soul,  
Had been of cherry pipes a cracker,  
And watched the creamy meerschaum's bowl  
Grow weekly, daily, hourly blacker ;

Read Calverley, and learnt by heart  
The lines he celebrates the weed in ;  
And blew my smoke in rings, an art  
That many try, but few succeed in.



In fact of nearly every style  
Of smoke I was a kindly critic,  
Though I had found Manillas vile,  
And Trichinopolis mephitic.

The stout tobacco jar became  
Within my smoking-room a fixture;  
I heard my friends extol by name  
Each one his own peculiar mixture.

And tried them every one in turn  
(*O varium, tobacco, semper!*);  
The strong I found too apt to burn  
My tongue, the weak to try my temper.

And all were failures, and I grew  
More tentative and undecided,  
Consulted friends, and found they knew  
As little as or less than I did.

Havannah yielded up her pick  
Of prime cigars to my fruition;  
I bought a case, and some "went sick,"  
The rest were never in condition.

Until in sheer fatigue I turned  
To you, tobacco's white-robed tyro,  
And from your golden legend learned  
Your maker dwelt and wrought in Cairo.

---

O worshipped wheresoe'er I roam  
As fondly as a wife by some is,  
Waif from the far Egyptian home  
Of Pharaohs, crocodiles, and mummies ;

Beloved, in spite of jeer and frown ;  
The more the Philistines assail you,  
The more the doctors run you down,  
The more I puff you—and inhale you.

Though worn with toil and vexed with strife  
(Ye smokers all, attend and hear me),  
Undaunted still I live my life,  
With you, my Cigarette, to cheer me.



## THE FORGOTTEN GODS

*(The gods and goddesses address Jupiter)*

FATHER of gods, before your throne  
We, who are gods, submissive stand.  
Though rule and might be yours alone,  
You speak no word, you raise no hand.  
We eat, we drink, we love, we hate,  
But not as in the days of yore—  
Alas! the gods who once were great  
Are great no more, are great no more.

Still on Olympus' cloud-girt height  
We dwell by many a circling star.  
The Sun, Apollo's Sun, shines bright,  
His steeds no longer whirl the car.  
Nor from his gleaming, golden bow  
The swift avenging darts are sped,  
And puny men cry out below  
"The gods are dead, the gods are dead."



Mute and deserted stands each shrine  
Once sacred to our matchless deeds;  
No more, no more 'mid streams of wine  
For us the stricken victim bleeds.  
The Temples where they sang our praise  
Long since have tottered to their fall,  
And through the dreary length of days  
Are silent all, are silent all.

Call back, O Jove, to praise and power,  
Call back your children, for you can.  
Despised no longer, rain a shower  
Of Fire upon presumptuous man.  
Let all our altars smoke once more,  
Shake the whole world with awful nods,  
And bid your white-robed priests restore  
The ancient gods, the ancient gods.


## THE FRIEZE OF THE PARTHENON

*England to Athens :—*

O QUEEN of Cities, with a crown of woe,  
Scarred by the ruin of two thousand years,  
By fraud and by barbarian force laid low,  
Buried in dust, and watered with the tears  
Of unregarded bondsmen, toiling on,  
Crushed in the shadow of their Parthenon ;

Mother of heroes, Athens, nought availed  
The Macedonian's triumph, or the chain  
Of Rome ; the conquering Osmanli failed,  
His myriad hosts have trampled thee in vain.  
They for thy deathless body raised the pyre,  
And held the torch, but Heaven forbade the fire.

Then didst thou rise, and, shattering thy bands,  
Burst in war's thunder on the Muslim horde,  
Who shrank appalled before thee, while thy hands  
Wielded again the imperishable sword,  
The sword that smote the Persian when he came,  
Countless as sand, thy virgin might to tame.



Mother of freemen, Athens, thou art free,  
 Free as the spirits of thy mighty dead;  
 And Freedom's northern daughter calls to thee,  
 "How shall I help thee, sister? Raise thy head,  
 O Athens, say what can I give thee now,  
 I who am free, to deck thy marble brow?"

. . . . .  
*Athens Replies:—*

Shot-dinted, but defiant of decay,  
 Stand my gaunt columns in a tragic line,  
 The shattered relics of a glorious day,  
 Mute guardians of the lost Athena's shrine.  
 The flame of hope, that faded to despair  
 Ere Hellas burst her chains, is imaged there.

Yet one there was who came to her for gain,  
 Ere yet the years of her despair were run;  
 And with harsh zeal defaced the ruined fane  
 Full in the blazing light of Hellas' sun.  
 Spoiling my home with sacrilegious hand,  
 He bore his captives to a foreign land.

Ilissus mourns his tutelary god,  
 Theseus in some far city doth recline:  
 Lost is the Horse of Night that erstwhile trod  
 My hall; the god-like shapes that once were mine  
 Call to me, "Mother save us ere we die,  
 Far from thy arms beneath a sunless sky."

How shall I answer? for my arms are fain

To clasp them fast upon the rock-bound steep,  
Their ancient home. Shall Athens yearn in vain,

And all in vain must woful Hellas weep?  
Must the indignant shade of Phidias mourn  
For his dear city, free but how forlorn?

How shall I answer? Nay, I turn to thee,

England, and pray thee, from thy northern throne  
Step down and hearken, give them back to me,

O generous sister, give me back mine own.  
Thy jewelled forehead needs no alien gem  
Torn from a hapless sister's diadem.




## A GREEN YULE

WINTER? Who speaks of him? Is this the king  
Who from his crystal towers in the north  
Ice-crowned and sceptred once did issue forth  
To take of earth her yearly offering?

How mighty from his citadel he came,  
Where the piled ramparts are of gleaming snow,  
Thundered upon by all the winds that blow,  
And stricken by the sun's unsetting flame.

Yet cannot the great Lord of warmth avail  
Against him, and the night on glowing wheels  
Drawn by fire-breathing steeds the more reveals  
His empire, which no rival can assail.

For the sad face of Autumn is not seen,  
Nor Summer's radiant visage, azure-eyed,  
Nor laughing Spring with tresses all untied,  
But he alone holds rule firm and serene.



Joyous and strong he was, and in his train  
Came Boreas the leader of the storms,  
And a vast concourse bright of shining forms,  
Snow kings and elfs to celebrate his reign.

The snow-topped mountain was to him a throne,  
And on the glaciers did he rest his feet ;  
There, when the moon was full, he took his seat,  
In that pale realm of shadows all his own,

Where night and silence are together wed  
Deep in the caverns of the craggy steeps,  
When the storm-voice is hushed that sometimes sweeps  
Over those tracts, by life untenanted.

Girt by the snow's eternal majesty  
There, till the mighty herald of the day  
Glittered upon the peaks did Winter stay,  
There did he meditate some high decree,

By which is stayed the streamlet's rapid course,  
And the full waters of the river cease,  
Or seem to cease from flowing, and deep peace  
Falls on the fountain's tumult at its source.

Then from his haunt at the bright sun's behest  
White-robed he stepped at morn forth issuing,  
And with him fluttering on fearless wing  
Came that small bird, of soft and ruddy breast,

Who seems to blush with Summer's parting kiss,  
Large-eyed, but uncomplaining of the fate  
That drives him forth chill and disconsolate  
In the sere twigs at such a time as this.

So in past years did Winter hold his sway,  
Stern it may be, but over all the earth  
Where he had rule was never lack of mirth,  
From morn unceasing to the close of day.

But now like one who treads with weary feet,  
A hollow-cheeked and tottering old man,  
Trembling upon the limit of his span  
Comes Winter whom no sounds of welcome greet.

Earth cannot honour him, nor stream nor air,  
So apt is he for pity and disdain;  
Only bleak winds are with him and the rain  
Drearly dropping in the branches bare.

The moon sheds not upon him her clear light,  
In misty vapours she withdraws her beams  
Only to light his way with fitful gleams  
Dances the fatal and misleading sprite,

Who dwells amid the oozy marshes damp,  
And solitary pools, and often thence  
Wrought like a dream of falsehood and pretence,  
Rises at night to trim his sickly lamp.



## HEBE IN OLYMPUS

THESE silent heights a prison are :

Not mine, not mine is all the glory  
Of sun and moon and spangled star,  
Of snow-clad peaks remote and hoary.  
O Thrones divine, though bright ye be,  
For me your radiant splendours glow not,  
I am not where I fain would be,  
And where I fain would be I know not.  
But in a dream I stretch my hand  
To some unknown but kindlier land.

Not here ; as in a fleeting dream,  
Far, far beyond these mournful portals  
I wander forth in joy and seem  
To hear the pleasant voice of mortals.  
Lo ! Great Olympus melts away,  
A shadow-realm these rocks replaces,  
Where I, a shadow, seem to stray  
'Mid dim, but half-remembered faces.  
Ah dreams, for one brief moment made,  
Too dim ye come, too fast ye fade.

## THE FOREST QUEEN IN EXILE

IN the forest, in the forest, ah ! how joyful are the days,  
For the sun itself is brighter and the leaves are greener  
there,  
And the lark goes rippling higher with his morning song  
of praise ;  
Yet he warns amid his warbling, " Oh, beware, my  
love, beware !  
Life is short and time is fleeting, oh, my darling, have a  
care !"  
Heed the warning that he utters  
As he ripples and he flutters,  
Passion's pilgrim swelling upward, ever upward in the  
air !

Shall I ever, shall I ever hear the whisper of the trees ?  
Hear again the ceaseless murmur of the brooklet flash-  
ing by ?  
Hear the far-off sounds of evening faintly wafted on the  
breeze,

See the rooks in slow procession as they sweep across  
the sky,  
In a black and solemn pageant, cawing, cawing as they  
fly;  
Then while all the world is sleeping  
Come the fairy-folk a-peeping,  
Tripping warily and coyly, for the fairy-folk are shy!

Little fairies, little fairies, when the night is calm and  
clear,  
Bring your fire-flies from their stable in the shelter of  
the pine;  
Then bestride them and come riding, tricked in all your  
fairy gear,  
While the night birds in amazement flit before you as  
you shine,  
Prancing, curvetting and charging, all your chivalry in  
line—  
Till at last you come and wake me,  
In the quiet night, and take me  
To the old familiar forest and the joys that once were  
mine.

## THE SWALLOW SWOOPING

*(With all proper apologies to Mr. George Meredith's  
"The Lark Ascending")*

SILENT, seraphically soft,  
He flickers and is borne aloft,  
A speck to sight, an orb of spray,  
His eager pinions cleave the day;  
Empearled in dewdrops, crystal bright,  
A radiance from the hem of night,  
Where the deep heart of noontide leads  
The ceaseless measure of the meads,  
Now caught in clouds, now rapt in rills,  
An echo of celestial thrills,  
Pale with the passion of the sky,  
A rosy burst of melody.  
He spreads, he droops, he shakes his wings,  
He pulses on the breast of things,  
He follows still and still pursues  
The folded footfall of the dews;  
Caught in a weft of silvery beams  
Unthreads the needle of his dreams,

Too frail for thought, too high to share  
His passage of the spiral stair  
Or tread the bridge that drives him sheer  
From here to there, from there to here,  
A broken gleam, a darting glint  
Of starry steel on fiery flint,  
Sprung from the master-vision heard  
At morning in the sun's first word,  
Renewed with every bursting boon  
That clings about the crescent moon ;  
He leaves at last, a flash of fire,  
His beaked companions of the wire,  
He floats, he darts, he swings, he stoops,  
He soars again, he twists, he swoops,  
He skims the stream, his bill a fate  
To gauzy wings that congregate,  
Where in her nest of shivering reeds  
The golden-hearted mother breeds,  
From day to day from night to night,  
Her brood of lilies bridal-white,  
Then flings aloft again and cleaves  
A zig-zag pathway to his eaves.

Was ever flight of ours could match  
So fleet, so gay a flight, or catch  
With airy hands the splendour born  
Of swiftiness mated in the morn  
To sunbeams frankly shaken free



Of earth and earth's mortality?  
Too pure, too wild, to take or tame,  
A burst, a jet, a spurt, a flame,  
The first glad spirit-shape that hurled  
His single breast against a world,  
He leaves our meaner gates ajar,  
Ensphered and born again, a star,  
Joyous, immaculate, content,  
Shoots from the sprinkled firmament,  
And free from blame as void of praise  
Goes twinkling through his Summer maze,  
Part of ourselves, and yet not all,  
Who cannot soar but fade and fall,  
Cling in the meshes of our fears,  
And groping blind forget the spheres,  
Or pause and poise, or trip and trim,  
Nor dare the leap that carried him,  
The soul of joy, the heart of light,  
In one clear sweep, superbly bright,  
Through earth's dead envelope of clay  
To sunshine and the living day.

## SILENCE AND SLEEP

*(Lines written at Cock-crow)*

NIGHT-TIME and silence! O'er the brooding hill  
The last faint whisper of the zephyr dies;  
Meadows and trees and lanes are hushed and still,  
A shroud of mist on the slow river lies;  
And the tall sentry poplars silent keep  
Their lonely vigil in a world of sleep.

Yea, all men sleep who toiled throughout the day  
At sport or work, and had their fill of sound,  
The jest and laughter that we mate with play,  
The beat of hoofs, the mill-wheel grinding round,  
The anvil's note on Summer breezes borne,  
The sickle's sweep in fields of yellow corn.

And I too, as the hours go softly by,  
Lie and forget, and yield to sleep's behest,  
Leave for a space the world without a sigh,  
And pass through silence into dreamless rest;  
Like a tired swimmer floating tranquilly  
Full in the tide upon a peaceful sea.

But hark, that sound; Again and yet again!  
Darkness is cleft, the stricken silence breaks,  
And sleep's soft veil is rudely rent in twain,  
And weary nature all too soon awakes;  
Though through the gloom has pierced no ray of light,  
To hail the dawn and bid farewell to night.

Still is it night, the world should yet sleep on,  
And gather strength to meet the distant morn.  
But one there is who, though no ray has shone,  
Waits not, nor sleeps, but laughs all rest to scorn,  
The demon-bird that crows his hideous jeer,  
Restless, remorseless, hateful Chanticleer.

One did I say? Nay, hear them as they cry;  
Six more accept the challenge of the foe:  
From six stretched necks six more must make reply,  
Echo, re-echo, and prolong the crow.  
First shrieking singly, then their notes they mix  
In one combined cacophony of six.

Miscalled of poets "herald of the day,"  
Spirit of evil, vain and wanton bird,  
Was there then none to beg a moment's stay  
Ere for thy being Fate decreed the word?  
Could not Asclepias, when he ceased to be,  
Take to the realms of death thy tribe and thee?

What boots it thus to question? for thou Art,  
And still shalt be; but never canst be still,  
Destined at midnight thus to play thy part,  
And when all else is silent to be shrill.  
Yea, as I lie all sleepless in the dark,  
I love not those who housed thee in the Ark.

## THE MUSIC IN OUR STREET

*(A word from a girl who lives in it)*

Did you ever 'ear our music? What, never? There's a shame;

I tell yer it's golopshus, we do 'ave such a game.

When the sun's a-shinin' brightly, when the fog's upon the town,

When the frost 'as bust the water-pipes, when rain comes pourin' down;

In the mornin' when the costers come a-shoutin' with their mokes,

In the evenin' when the gals walk out a-spoonin' with their blokes,

When Mother's washin' Billy, or when Father wants 'is tea,

When the boys are in the "Spotted Dog" a'-aving of a spree,

No matter what the weather is, or what the time o' day,  
*Our* music allus visits us, and never goes away.

And when they've tooned themselves to-rights I tell yer it's a treat

Just to listen to the lot of 'em a-playin' in our street.

There's a chap as turns the orgin—the best I ever 'eard—  
O lor,' he does just jabber, but you can't make out a  
word.

I can't a-bear Italians, as allus uses knives,  
And talks a furrin lingo all their miserable lives.  
But this one calls me Bella—which my Christian name  
is Sue—

And 'e smiles and turns 'is orgin very proper, that he do.  
Sometimes 'e plays a polker, and sometimes it's a  
march,

And I see 'is teeth all shinin' through 'is lovely black  
mustarch.

And the little uns dance round him, you'd laugh until  
you cried,

If you saw my little brothers do their 'ornpipes side by  
side,

And the gals they spin about as well, and don't they  
move their feet,

When they 'ear that pianner-orgin man, as plays about  
our street.

There's a feller plays a cornet too, and wears a ulster-  
coat,

My eye, 'e does puff out 'is cheeks a-tryin' for 'is note.  
It seems to go right through yer, and, oh, it's right-down  
rare

When 'e gives us "Annie Laurie" or "Sweet Spirit, 'ear  
my Prayer";

'E's so stout that when 'e's blowin' 'ard you think 'e  
must go pop;  
And 'is nose is like the lamp (what's red) outside a  
chemist's shop.  
And another blows the penny-pipe,—I allus thinks it's  
thin,  
And I much prefers the cornet when 'e ain't bin drinkin'  
gin.  
And there's Concertina-Jimmy; it makes yer want to  
shout,  
When 'e acts just like a windmill, and waves 'is arms  
about.  
Oh, I'll lay you 'alf a tanner, you'll find it 'ard to beat  
The good old 'eaps of music that they gives us in our  
street.

And a pore old ragged party comes shufflin' through the  
wet,  
She sings to suit 'er 'usband, while 'e plays the clarinette.  
'Er voice is dreadful wheezy, and I can't exactly say  
I like 'er style of singin' "Tommy Dodd" or "Nancy  
Gray."  
But there, she does 'er best, I'm sure; I mustn't run 'er  
down,  
When she's only tryin' all she can to earn a honest  
brown.  
Still, though I'm mad to 'ear 'em play, and sometimes  
join the dance,

I often wish one music gave the other kind a chance.  
The organ might have two days, and the cornet take a  
third,  
While the pipe-man tried o' Thursdays 'ow to imitate a  
bird.  
But they allus comes together, singin' playin' as they  
meet  
With their clarinettes and organs in the middle of our  
street.

But there, I can't stand chatterin', pore mother's mortal  
bad,  
And she's got to work the whole day long to keep things  
straight for dad.  
Complain? Not she. She scrubs an' rubs with all 'er  
might and main,  
And the lot's no sooner finished, but she's got to start  
again.  
There's a patch for Johnny's jacket, a darn for Billy's  
socks,  
And an hour or so o' needlework a-mendin' Polly's  
frocks;  
With floors to wash, and plates to clean, she'd soon be  
skin and bone  
( 'Er cough's that's aggravatin' ) if she did it all alone.  
There'll be music while we're workin', to keep us on the  
go—



I like my tunes as fast as fast, pore mother likes 'em  
slow—

Ah! she don't get much to laugh at, nor yet too much  
to eat,

And the music stops 'er thinkin' when they play it in the  
street.

## A SONG OF DETECTION

*(Adapted to the latest Literary Methods.)*

I'm the latter-day prince of detectives, a sort of lieutenant  
to Fate ;

I can track out a crime or detect a *faux pas*, or unravel  
a plot while you wait.

The wife ~~who~~ is wanted, the parent mislaid, the heir  
unaccountably strayed,

I produce without fail, and dispatch them by rail with the  
carriage correctly prepaid.

No amount of disguise

Is too great for my eyes ;

My mind never falters or dozes,

Though they add to their chests

By inflating their vests,

Or construct a new bridge to their noses.

But I'm always precisely at hand with a clue,

And my price is—but there, I can leave it to you.

If a statesman with orchid and eye-glass goes out for his  
five o'clock tea,

He may think himself wrapped in an ample disguise, but  
he can't get the better of me.

I am off on his heels in a moment, and into my note-book  
he goes

As a fighter of grit who is like Mr. Pitt, with a touch of  
the gout in his toes.

Down he goes in my notes

With his talent for votes,

And his style which is dapper and dressy,

With a hint at the fall

That he got from Oom Paul,

And the faithful devotion of Jesse.

And his name, which is somehow connected with  
screw,

Is—you know it, of course, so I'll leave it to you.

Last week I detected a coster, at least he was rigged up  
up as such,

With a can-full of naphtha to light up his cart and someone  
to act as his Dutch :

His goods were the whelk that you swallow alive and the  
shrimp you devour when he's dead,

And a cap fashioned whole from the skin of a mole  
adorned and protected his head.

But I knew him at once,

Since I wasn't a dunce ;

In rhymes he was really a trader ;

For he dropped on the road

Half a sonnet, an ode,

And a ballad addressed to a raider.

With some cantos of blank that I failed to read through—  
If you're anxious to guess him begin with A.U.

When the criminal class is quiescent, the blue-coated  
constable comes

To his beat with his helmet and truncheon, and there he  
just twiddles his thumbs.

Oh, it's then that, to tickle the popular taste, and that  
without thinking of pelf,

In a fraction of time I invent a new crime, and commit  
and detect it myself.

For a plot of my own

I can follow alone,

Whether others adopt or eschew it ;

And it adds to your fun,

If you want a thing done,

To go out by yourself and to do it.

Of the sleuth-hounds of crime I have met one or two,

But the name of the best—well, I leave it to you.

## A PLEA FOR A PLURAL

You, who in sultry weather  
To Scotland take your way,  
To roam the purple heather  
And bring the grouse to bay,  
Oh, sportsman intramooral,  
Declare, I beg, to me,  
If grouse possessed a plural,  
What would that plural be?

What fairness is there in it  
If other, meaner birds,  
Lark, sparrow, swallow, linnet,  
Have, all, their plural words?  
One grouse we know and cherish;  
It shows but little *vous*,  
When ten or twenty perish,  
To group them all as grouse.

No matter what intention  
Inspires them, I accuse  
Of poorness of invention  
These paltry single views.

If men may dwell in houses,  
Why deem it a disgrace  
To speak of grouse as "grouses"  
Whenever there's a brace?

This word I note with pain, Sir,  
Is hardly to your mind;  
You bid me try again, Sir,  
Some better term to find.  
Well, "grouses" I abandon;  
Since mouse gives birth to mice,  
I take my final stand on  
The missing word as "grice."

With this new word provided,  
Go, let your sport be good.  
Shoot, shoot as oft as I did,  
But hit—I rarely could.  
Yet count not ere you grass them  
Your grice as in the house.  
How oft your pellets pass them  
Is singular—like grouse.

## THE RUNAWAY RHYME

I ONCE sat astride on a runaway rhyme ;  
He was bitted and bridled and saddled with care ;  
I had tightened the girths and had ventured to climb,  
Heart in mouth, to the saddle, determined to dare.  
Then, his eyes flashing fire and his nostrils all blood,  
He was off with a rush like a river in flood.

I spoke to him softly, I tugged at the rein,  
Lay back, braced my shoulders to master his mouth ;  
But he forced his head down, and went scouring the plain  
With the speed of a swallow that flies to the south.  
And behind, far behind, echoed faintly the sounds,  
Where the quarry lay hiding, of horn and of hounds.

I had tracked it at eve, all intent to rehearse  
The delights of the morrow, through brushwood and  
brake ;  
I had thought never quarry was fitter for verse,  
Made my plan for its capture, all night lain awake.  
And at break of the day, with my crop going crack,  
Spurred and booted I went and unkennelled the pack.



Then I mounted old "Hack-rhyme" and ambled along—

I knew all his tricks and his paces by heart—

Till we came to the covert, and there 'mid the throng

One steed topped the others; the sight made me start,  
For a voice seemed to whisper, "If manhood endures,  
That's the horse you must hunt on; be bold, he is yours."

I was down in a moment; I stood by his side

While he tossed his thin head in desire of the run.

"That horse," said the voice, "is the horse you must ride;

He could carry you straight from the earth to the sun.

He was fashioned of fury and fire in a day——"

Then I lingered no more, but was up and away.

The forests, the rivers, the fields, that I knew,

Rushing forth like a tempest, he left them behind;

Took the fences and brooks in his stride as he flew,

Unabashed and unchecked in the heart of the wind.

And he crashed and he thundered regardless of me,

Till I heard as we galloped the roar of the sea.

Yes, the sea was in front, and again and again

I fought with the devil whose back I bestrode.

My strength was as water; I struggled in vain;

On, on, ever onward we rattled and rode;

Till at last, on a sudden, he stopped and stood stiff

As a statue of stone on the edge of the cliff.



And I? Like an arrow I sped through the air,  
And the waves as I fell seemed to rise with a leap,  
Till they claimed me and clasped me, and down in despair,  
With a curse on all riding, I sank in the deep.  
Then I knew nothing more till I woke on the sand,  
Where the purposeless ocean had flung me to land.

. . . . .

So now I am cautious ; one ride is enough  
On a rhyme which, thank goodness, I never saw since.  
They may jeer me and flout me and dub me a muff ;  
Though my withers be wrung, I contrive not to wince.  
For I fain would ride safely, and vowed that next time  
I would rather ride prose than a runaway rhyme.

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## THE GREAT AUK'S EGGS

A HUNDRED years or more ago  
A Great Auk laid two final eggs ;  
Then, since she found existence slow,  
She drained life's beaker to the dregs,

And died ; she was the last Great Auk,  
And knew that she had lived too late—  
It may be she had met a hawk,  
And died of want of aspirate.—

At any rate she wholly died—  
It is a mournful tale I tell—  
And left, with much she loved beside,  
Two orphaned Auklets in their shell.

Down death's dark, dusty way she went,  
Last of her race, alone, sublime.  
Her eggs remained ; the bird had meant  
To hatch them, but she had no time.

Years passed ; an egg-collector came,  
A spectacled and eager man,  
"Eureka ! here," he cried "is fame";  
And took the eggs, and off he ran.

Unto the mart he bent his legs ;  
And soon the wondrous rumour grew,  
And others came to view the eggs,  
All spectacled and eager too.

Bid followed bid, the eggs were bought,  
And twice two hundred guineas paid,  
And no one gave a single thought  
To her by whom the eggs were laid.

Yet doth her fate provoke *my* tears :  
When poets shall have ceased to be,  
Thus men may rush in future years  
To buy my books, nor think of me.



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